

# Acting in Redundancy





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## EDITORIAL

Sometimes committing a great act is not the best way to achieve a certain goal. Many of today's urban issues require a more delicate form of intervention. *Acting in redundancy* shows the vision of students in their search for a certain added quality, which in many cases can be found in the most redundant things. This publication wants to express the importance of this search, which asks to explore the minimal solutions in places where they can trigger a big change. The goal of this publication is to appeal a wide range of interested audiences:

**Students**, to provide them with an idea about where and how to search for the small interventions and what could be the possibilities. **Architects and urban planners**, to share our ideas about this topic and show that there are some fresh ideas hidden in the existing urban landscape. **City councils**, to bring forward opportunities to do something modest with a large impact, which can not only have a better social impact, but also an economical and ecological advantage. So to anyone who it might concern, this publication shows how we tried to deal with certain situations and opportunities in a very subtle and thoughtful way.

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**ATELIERFICHE**

**CATHERINE MENGÉ** COORDINATOR  
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# **title**

*Acting in redundancy*

## **objectives**

Key-objective: learn to design sustainable and fragile interventions in the city.

Design a sustainable architecture project that in a obvious way takes into account all the interesting characteristics of the context, with which it enters into a intense and right relationship. To reach sustainable projects the designer has to deal consciously with the qualities of an environment and with the given resource. Therefore he has to understand the fragile essence of a place and learn about the relationship of the context to an architectural program. This attitude can lead to a 'simple', 'obvious' and 'sustainable' architectural project. Therefore students have to:

- explore and understand the opportunities and specificities of a site (see relevance and redundancy);

- seek the position and attitude in the project that is coherent and sincere to the site;

- design a building with structural and social intelligence, ecological and economical efficiency;

- apply criteria of sustainability.

The design is not only the reflection of functionality and rational limits, but moreover it is the result of a more intuitive approach which manages complexity to simplicity taking into account the identity and all other characteristics of the place . This way of designing can give an answer to a universal need for authenticity, beauty, humanity. Only by recognizing the limits (e.g. stability, economic and legal exit points, ...) and knowing everything about the complexity of the environment, the future users, the casual observer, etc. The creation of a good architecture project is possible.



## content: program and theme

### *The fragile essence of a place*

The aim of sustainable development is to create and maintain a prosperous social, economic and ecological system. Sustainable urban design and architecture also includes this different subjects and complexity. That is why this kind of projects not only have to endure time or have to take into account the efficiency of using resources such as land, water, building materials, power supply...but also have to deal with the qualities of the environment. Understand the fragile essence of a place and learn about the relationship between the context and the architectural program can lead to a simple and obvious architectural project that fortifies the specific spot. The key to a conscious and coherent project is to provide added value to the environment by removing redundancy and add respectful contextual interventions. **Acting in redundancy stands for a sustainable project that respects the identity and complexity of a place and social environment and that fortifies this location on every layer.** Sustainability has to do with many elements, although in this design studio we will focus on the next subjects :

#### 1. choice of location

Redesign redundant, eroded or content-less urban spaces that need to be fortified;

#### 2. understand the location

All positive and negative characteristics of the site are investigated and analysed;

A master plan provides spatial solutions to the wider context the architectural input resonates with the context and gives it more value;

#### 3. minimal and conscious design

Through an intense examination of program and location searching for simplicity within the architectural design;

Designing with minimal resources towards a sustainable project;

#### 4. designing “intelligently” & “integrally” with building components & building materials.

## *Site*

Ghent, (within the '19th century belt') the city where the international students in this workshop will live for some months or a year is by excellence an area of research.

On the one hand because in this way the students get the chance to learn about the city and on the other hand because an intense and frequent site research is possible without large displacements.

On foot or bike they are asked to search a significant place where acting in redundancy is possible (without defined program).

The attitude to be learned is that 'a thorough reading of a location' is necessary to achieve a good design. Analysis and design research on location is important. In the 3th week of the site research there is an appointment with the teachers on location.

## *Program*

The program has to do with the ability to go to the essence of a spatial intervention on the chosen site. Each location 'calls' for a specific interpretation and program. Reading and understanding the place in a profound way can lead to a sustainable project.

An important exercise is the critical definition of the program

1. in relation to the function to accommodate
  - learn to simplify and search for the essence;
2. in relation to the contextual characteristics, "calibration" of programs to the environment
  - learn to see the difference between the relevant and the redundant;
  - learn that the area shows how the program can get a content;
  - learn to seek for a more value for the environment;
3. in relation to the reality of sustainability
  - learn to assess the impact of any intervention.

# timing and organization

## *Working method design studio:*

1. introduction (design project, working method, theoretical component)
2. working in group with different nationalities (brainstorm about the project and working method)
3. Every student has to make graphic and written reports on the individual design-‘process’, thoughts, reflections on visited exhibitions, lectures, movies, projects etc. .... These reports are kept in an individual log. This book on B5 will be part of the individual final assessment
4. analysis of the context: thorough reading and analysis of the context is necessary, recognizing qualities and weaknesses of the site
5. critical understanding of the program
6. vision and strategy set out in a master plan for the larger context
7. architecture project

## *Theoretical Component - Building Technology*

Insertion in the studio

The TC integrates fully into the studio task through a rigorous assessment of the material qualities of the site and the intelligent composition of different building components of the architectural design

Lectures

The TC lectures will hand the student a set of “technical”, “technological”, “tectonic” notions to assist his/her research. The lectures will concentrate on the importance of “precision” in any design effort.

Precision of communication through representation – diagrams, drawings, models,...

Precision of building elements – scale , dimension, *integrality*,...

## Output

The output for the TC is integral part of the design studio work.

A particular attention will be given throughout the semester on precise documentation & argumentation through graphic & model representations, specifically self-explanatory detailed drawings of the architectural design.

Students group produce a weekly A1-format graphic document as report of their research.

## **study material**

> References (p. 128)

‘Acting in redundancy’ is a complex and challenging exercise, in which architecture students go on a search for the identity of a urban space. With their knowledge, they will attempt to do a specific, contextually bound intervention. During this gentle process, the students can profile not only themselves, but also their social and spatial engagement within their architectural thinking.

When four years ago the task was given to organise an international architecture studio on the subject of economical sustainability applied to complex buildings, there was first of all thought about the essence of the term ‘sustainability’. Although reducing a buildings energy consumption and awareness of resources are also subjects which could be treated in this exercise, there was an intention towards a more holistic approach. One in which working with the context stands as a central focus.

A sensible reading of the site can in this way lead towards answers which are sustainable in a more inclusive way. In this case it's not only about the social, ecological or spatial aspect of sustainability, but about a ‘total’ solution which is closely connected to the ‘place’ and offers a solution for as much needs and people as possible. The fact is that the solution is often already present on site - le déjà là - and that only a small effort is enough to bring forward a useful way of re-using the place as it is. This is an important insight that the exercise can give to the students. They can practice the ability to see the different contextual layers of a site and learn to understand its specific character. It might seem easy, but requires a really personal and specific realisation process. Through research by design, step by step the essence of the place is exposed. By doing this, coming to a sensitive and context-bound design becomes possible. Nonetheless, a modest and empathetic approach is necessary to come to this kind of spatial solutions.

‘Acting in redundancy’ above all tackles the ‘multitude’ peculiar to our society. How can we handle this superfluity, this redundancy? Is it a fault and should we strive towards sobriety<sup>1</sup> or is redundancy necessary to respect the dynamics of the place<sup>2</sup>? Critical reflection on (im)possibilities is essential in this design process. Is liveability in a space created by demolition or through giving a new meaning to it? How can we as designer serve the (future) user(s) in the best possible way? Which needs and dynamics are present now and how can these be enhanced by bringing fresh spatial proposals?

The proposals are situated within the centre of Ghent, to make sure the students can get to know the place and its inhabitants and/or users quite intensively. With an empathetic position as a base, the correct approach for a specific site and its dynamics is searched through research and design. The results of this sensitive and researching process, each in their own way emphasise on a sort of continuing sustainability.

There exists a beauty that lies beyond subjectivity. An objective beauty, beauty in itself, beauty for its own sake, beauty without the need to be noticed or appreciated. This beauty I speak of I call intrinsic beauty.

Intrinsic beauty I would like to argue is the holy grail of aesthetics. It is a beauty in its purest form, a paradoxical but at the same time mythological beauty that cannot be fully defined as this very act would destroy it. As such finding intrinsic beauty is a quest where the journey is infinite.

Trying to create beauty is a dangerous undertaking as it will always be a subjective exercise. Therefore in my quest for intrinsic beauty I try to remove elements like ideas, concepts, references etc. in my work. This means removing all factors that could have an influence on the onlookers or users. This however does not mean that the outcome of this process would necessarily result in minimalism, as intrinsic beauty has no agenda. Intrinsic beauty has no convictions and as such stands open to the perceptions of its users or onlookers without trying to steer them in a certain direction.

Intrinsic beauty is a democratic beauty not aimed towards or understood only by a certain group of people. It is autonomous, universal, not constricted to the eye of the beholder, but a higher beauty and an objective beauty. It can be everlasting, a mere moment in time or remain undiscovered. Intrinsic beauty is a myth, a paradox and an infinite quest.

Bruno Taut's Hyuga Residence consists of a narrow basement extension under an existing concrete platform for a Japanese style two-story wooden villa situated on the edge of a cliff, overlooking the ocean.

The tendency at the time much like today was to reduce architecture to easily comprehensible objects. Taut however shared no interest in this question, too preoccupied with a problem that nobody else had noticed. He experimented with the experience, perception and the sequence of spaces and as such took meticulous care for every detail, selection of materials and the design.

The scale of manipulations and diversity of experiences was too delicate to be captured on camera. The project was ridiculed or ignored by the object-obsessed media, and Japan regretted ever supporting him. This didn't concern Taut, as he felt that he was for the first time busy creating a spiritual architecture, rather than something formalist. The project as a result was not particularly Japanese or Western, but a truly new architecture.

Whether there is intrinsic beauty to be found in the Hyuga Residence is debatable. For me the real importance of this project lies in Taut's realisation and subsequent quest.

In this design studio we try to recreate a similar environment with enough freedom and uncertainty to inspire a search for meaning. The only condition is for the students to present a realisation.

We hope this search and realisation inspires a quest, and a deeper understanding of their respective positions and accompanying responsibilities.



This studio was about intuition. Intuition seen as the capacity to develop solutions through the absorption of more and more quantities of content. Seen as the capacity to find clearness in increasing complexity. In many cases, intuition is made possible by absorption. By absorption of facts, dialogs, feelings and thoughts. This absorption asks for accumulation. It needs time. By contrast the deployment of intuition is immediate, not gradual. To create the conditions of intuition, the temporality of the studio was double. The time of the project is discontinuous, so was the timing in the studio. It was based on both a rigorous and slow sedimentation of produced material and a demanding back and forth between proposals and radical critic. As teachers, we asked the students a non-stop production of plans, models and sketches. The produced materials allowed creating emulation, exchanges, verification of the hypothesis. Above all, it was a slow emergence of the materiality of the intentions, before any project. The back and forth between proposals and radical critic was pushed to the very end of the semester. It ended with bold proposals, engaging intentions with the complexity of the sites. In many cases, this strategy allowed the students to reach one goal: projects that, to borrow the words of Gaston Bachelard, “were slight accents of the real”.



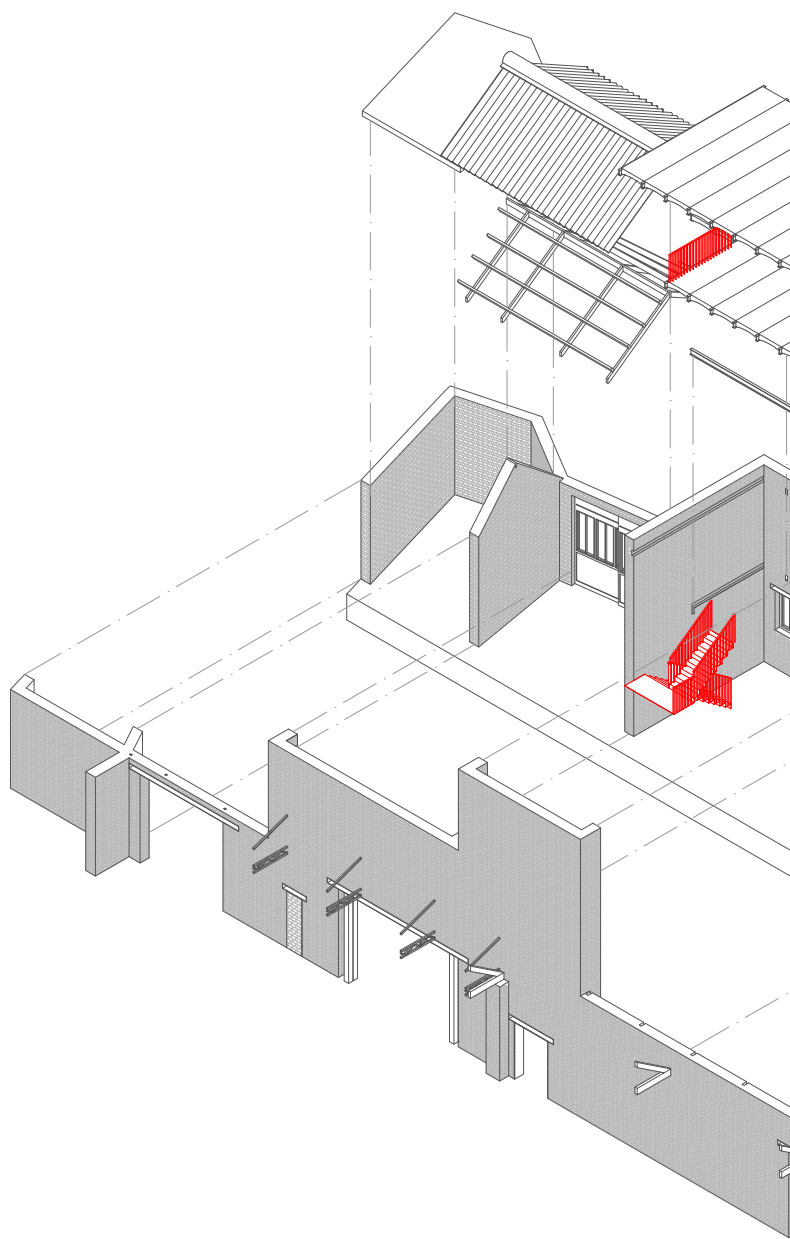
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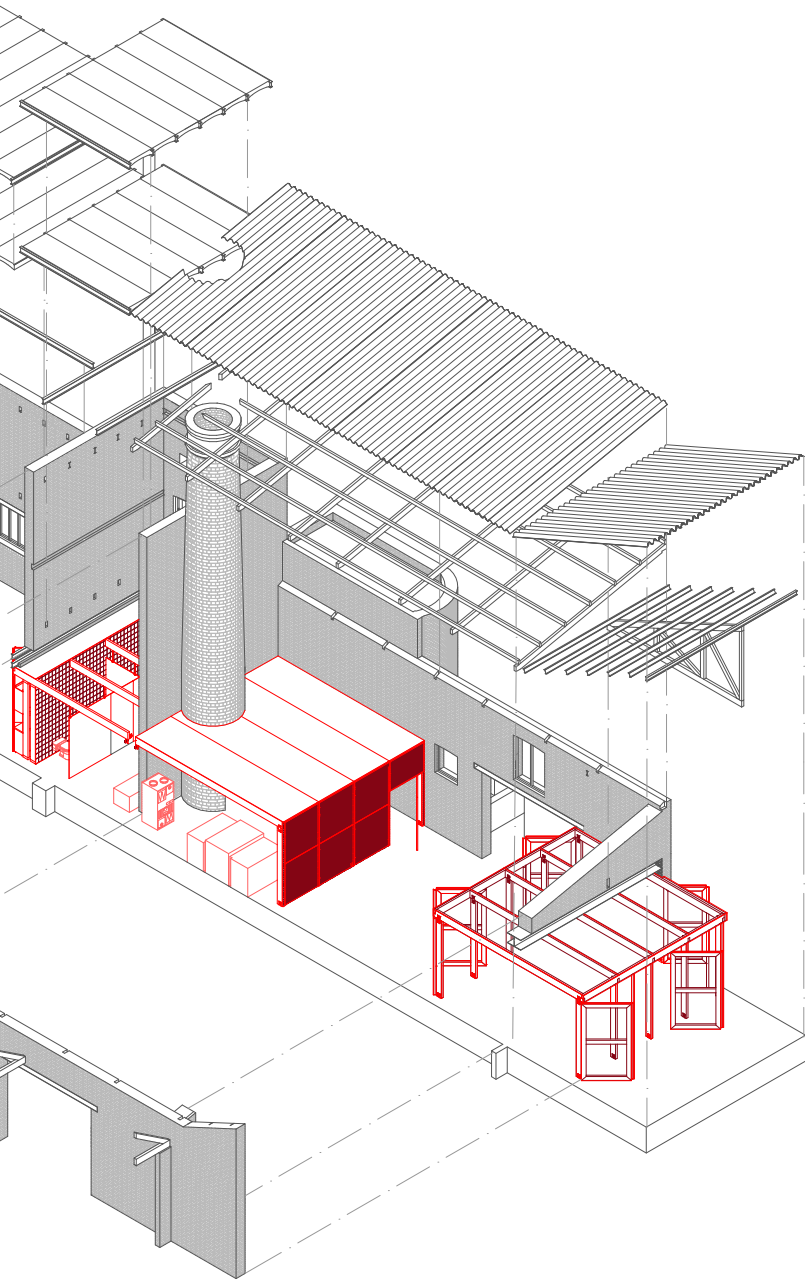


A subtle, simple intervention which on itself can be considered redundant, but can trigger a bigger change. We approached this subject by choosing a site which was a cluster of very different building fragments linked together, each having their own (hi)story, function and influence in the direct neighbourhood. Through the introduction of small interlinked functions and a new basic infrastructure, we give the opportunity for this place to grow from being not only a local private parking, into a multi-functional neighbourhood space. The most important feature in our concept is that we conceived the central part of the site as a sort of core, which we like to call the spine. This spine acts as a central point for the re-activation of the site. There are three elements situated here: the hub, the machine and a sanitation/kitchen/connection part. The starting point is the machine which contains all the technical equipment and installation which provides the new infrastructure for the whole building cluster. Then there is the hub which is not only the main output point for this infrastructure, it is also a space to be used. It can be open but also turned into a separate room/function, it is the instigator for a lot of scenarios in this place. Then there is also the sanitation/kitchen block, which provides the basic needs to give the opportunity to the place to have more use, more function. Not only as a space but also in time, for example: the fact that there is a toilet gives you the chance to stay for a longer time, etc. We also provide a safe access to the floors above, so that in a later stage this space can also be used. So by fitting in these subtle intervention, we provide not an immediate change, but the opportunity for more, and the ingredients for scenarios that go far beyond what this space can be today.

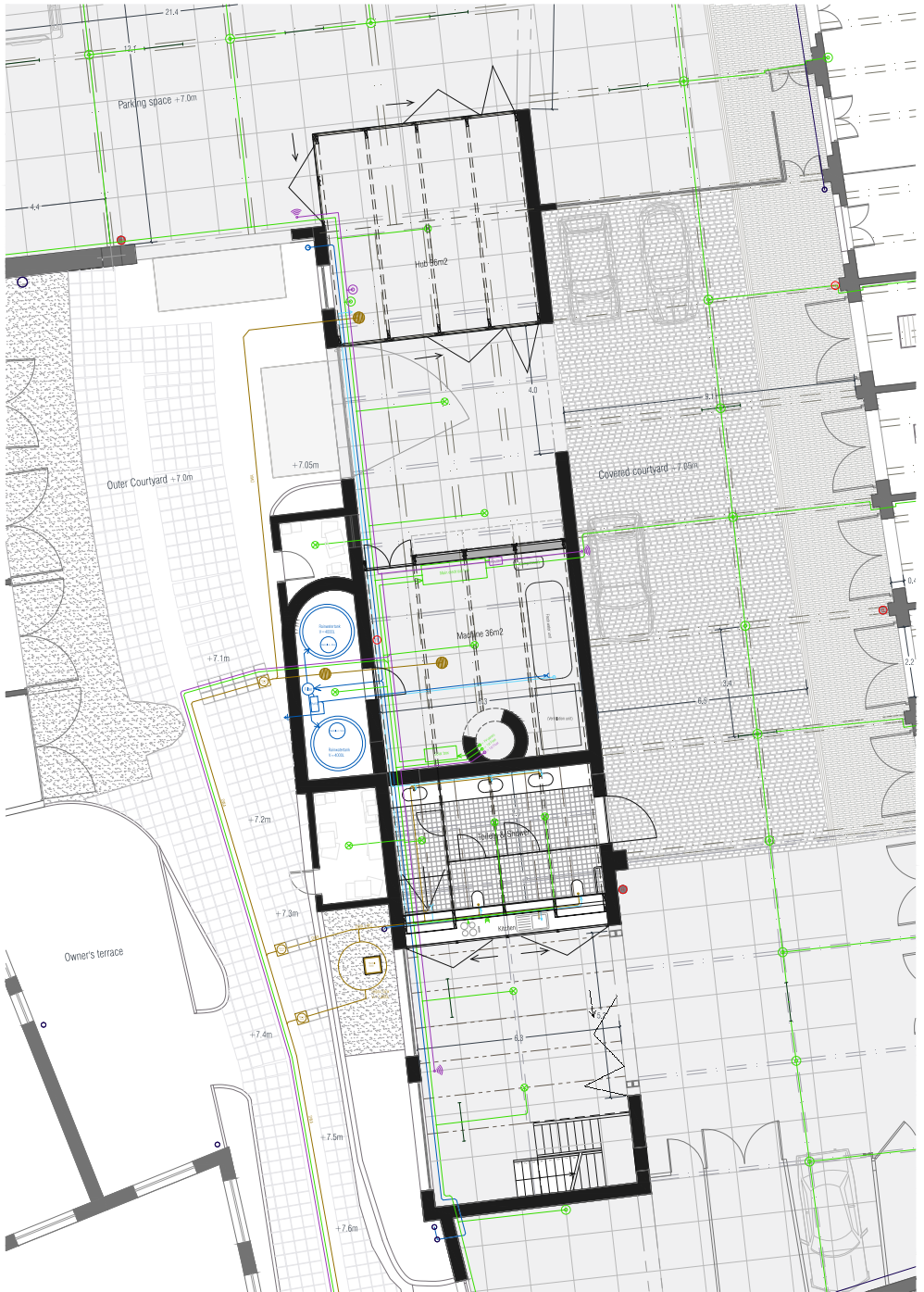
*External link (stop-motion film): <https://vimeo.com/78665291>*

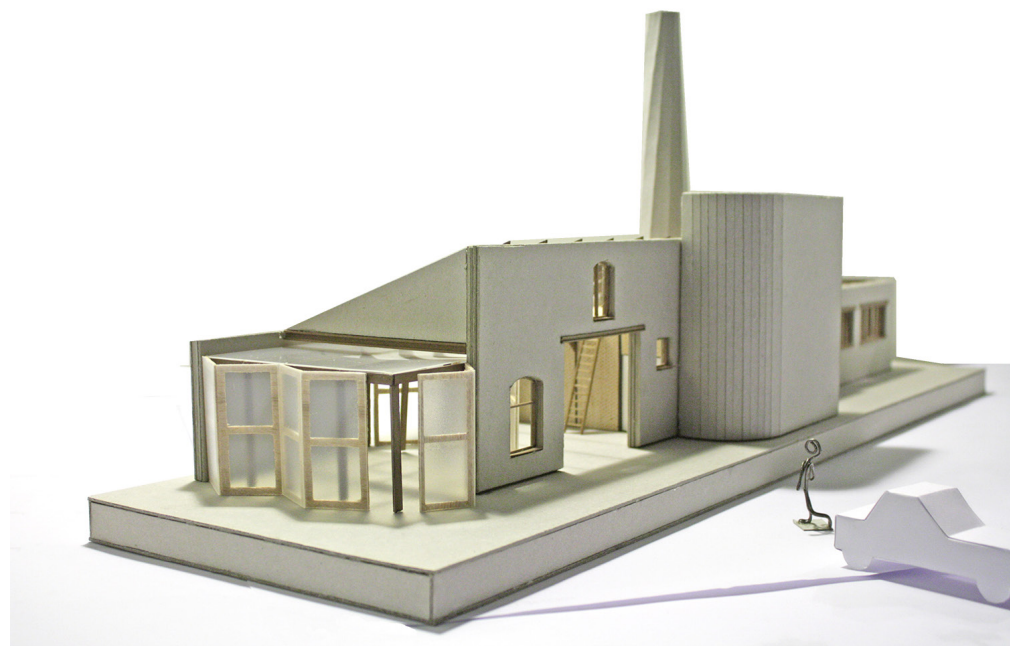
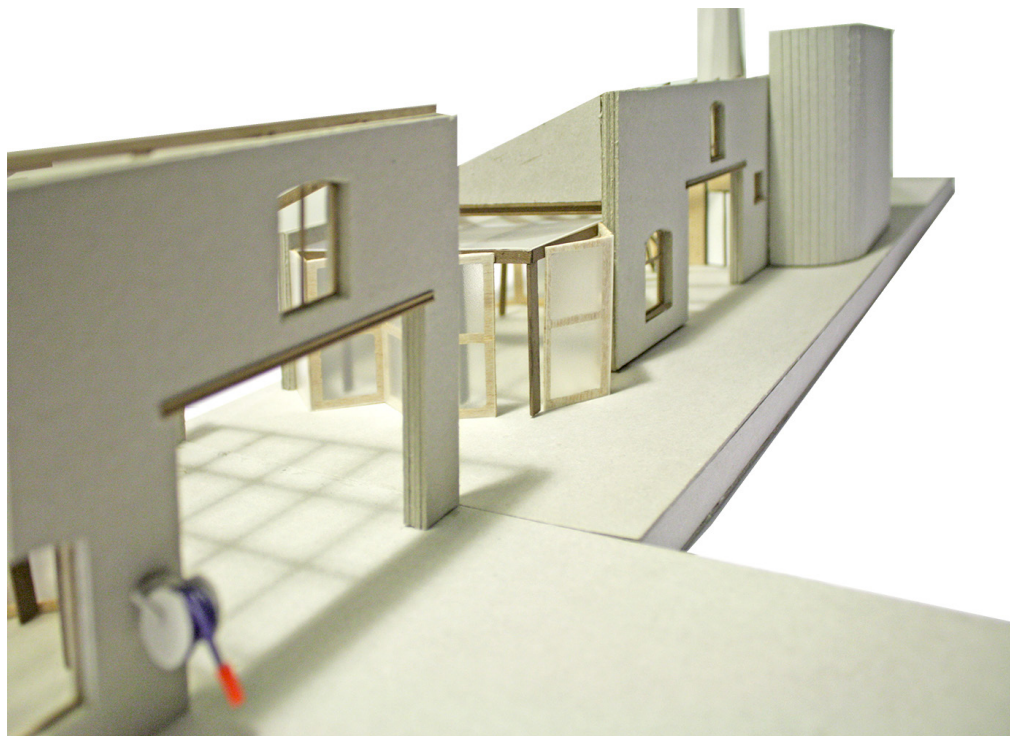


*Isometric exploded view, build-up of the intervention.*









*Model pictures.*



Colm MacAoidh  
Simon Matthys  
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The Groenebriel site lies on the periphery of the city centre of Gent, between the historical centre and the suburbs. Existing on the margins, this edge condition has shaped the development of the site, from medieval times until the present situation. In the 50s the current modernist housing complex was developed as a solution to the crowded and unsanitary conditions of the previous *beluiken* that it replaced. Groenebriel's location on the periphery led to it being forgotten when the City of Gent drew up the boundaries of the administrative districts, so for many years it was neglected in the provision of community and public amenities and services.

The apartment blocks are surrounded by AZ Sint Lucas Hospital, the Volks Clinic and various elderly people's homes. Apart from these complexes, there are no public amenities for residents on the site, so the hospitals play a major role in providing facilities such as shops and cafes. However, the connections between the apartments and the hospitals are hindered by the current layout of the site. The first thing one notices when visiting the site is the large volume of cars on the site, and how they have priority over every other user - the majority of the site is given over to roads or car parking spaces, making it very pedestrian unfriendly and generally unwelcoming.

It is one of the most diverse areas in Gent, with more than half the residents of non-Belgian origin. However, according to inhabitants, many of the social problems found on the site are caused by misunderstandings between neighbours from different backgrounds. Drug dealers, alcoholics, and drug addicts are also a problem.

The next most significant problem in the eyes of the locals are cars which fill the whole site, creating a cover for illegal drug market and criminality. The previous Groenebriel development plan that produced the current situation failed perhaps precisely because it was overplanned: that is to say, it was too strict and rigid, and could not easily adapt to changing contexts and situations. A place can become obsolete relatively quickly if it has been planned in such a way that it cannot be changed - people need to be able to change the spaces they live in, to appropriate them, since in this way every person can affirm their place and identity.

Therefore in our intervention on the Groenebriel, we don't propose a return to *tabula rasa* with a new masterplan. Instead, we want to take a

more pragmatic approach and work with what is already there, reorganising it in a way that is more logical to the current situation. While originally the space was planned in accordance with the scale of the motor car, we reorganise it around the scale of the human being. The most important element of our approach is the total removal of cars from the site, which we believe can act as the engine that will drive a reactivation of the site.

To begin, we examine the site carefully and inventory every currently existing surface, organising the paving tiles and other objects. Some we retain while re-laying others to make more pedestrian-friendly routes around the site.

We propose a new tram stop at the southern end of the central courtyard, that improves public transport access for both the hospital and the apartment residents, and replaces the need for private cars. Residents' cars will be removed to the edges of the site, and a new car park being built at the hospital takes care of visitors' cars.

The wide road at the northern end of the site that is currently filled with row upon row of parked cars becomes a tree-lined, pedestrian priority boulevard, forming a new spine or backbone that connects the series of different open spaces on the site. The boulevard offers a suitable new home for the existing fea market, with space for the stalls between the trees. The existing play park and grassy area in the eastern courtyard is popular with residents and currently works well so we will retain this feature, and simply remove the existing carparking spaces to enlarge the green area.

Currently the community holds events in the public space, for example parties at Christmas and New Years, and a neighbourhood festival with a popular fea market every summer. However they have no dedicated space for events, so to facilitate these important neighbourhood activities we create an events space in the central courtyard, with as much free space as possible to give possibilities for many kinds of uses and events. A line of trees on either side of this space creates a transitional zone between the private homes in the buildings and the public square, as well as offers a linear space for the fea market.

The western courtyard is the most private in character of the spaces on the site, and for this reason and in order to discourage activities such

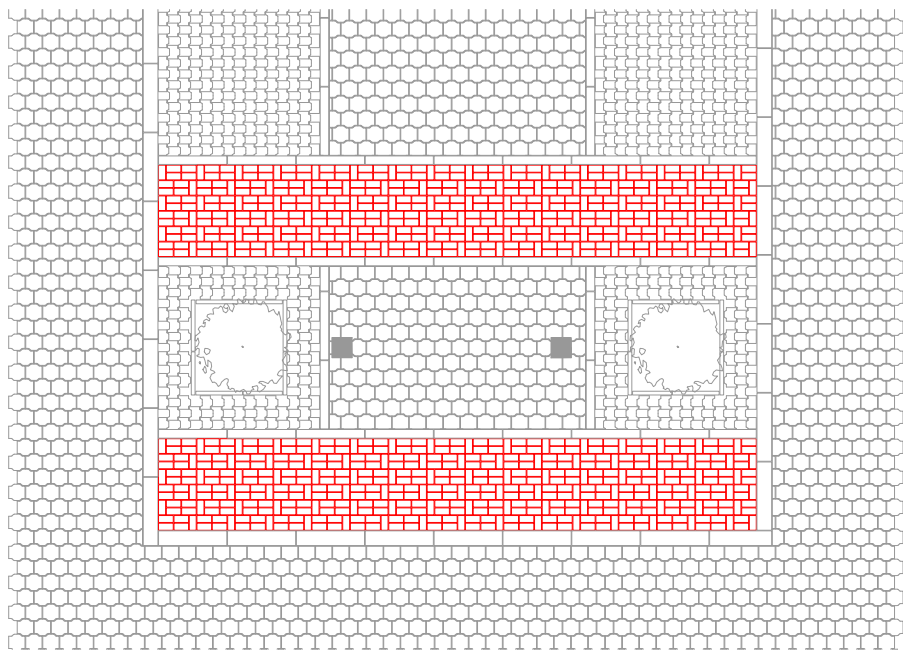
as clandestine dumping of rubbish as currently happens, we propose offering the space to the residents and the patients of the nearby hospitals as a community garden, where they can 'rent' a plot for allotment for a nominal fee.

In addition to the improvements in the public realm, we propose to reactivate the street level by refurbishing currently unused or under-utilised spaces in the ground floor levels of some of the apartment buildings. These can provide space for much-needed local amenities, and offer the inhabitants opportunities to interact with each other outside of their apartments, as well as improving social control of the public space.

In our reorganisation of the Groenebriel, we suggest a framework within which things can develop, and which can adapt to future developments and changes, since we cannot foresee what the future will bring. It will give the inhabitants the freedom to appropriate the space to their needs and develop in a way that suits them, and hopefully can respond to changing needs.



*Image of the groundcover forming the space.*



Detail boulevard  
1:50



Section boulevard  
1:50

*Technical plan & section.*





*Implementation of urban farming.*



*Placement of the gardens.*



Sis Pillen  
Gema Hernández Moral  
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The site is surrounded by several means of transport: a viaduct and rail-tracks, leaving a clear delimited area inside to study. Here we could only find one line of houses, an old abandoned factory and a new warehouse: it acted like a small island. As we were confronted with an attainable site, we took a detective approach in our study, trying to figure out how the place worked, both in a material and social way. This brought us to several conclusions. First of all, the row of houses was populated by both elder and younger people, which acted as a community and had events on the street in summer. Secondly, the new buildings acted as a warehouse, selling materials made out of plastic and for food treatment; and the abandoned factory had had several functions (frame factory, recycling factory, and actually “canvas” for street artists), which had polluted extremely the ground. This ground pollution was our starting point in the design. Up to eight metals and oil were to be found in our ground, in different quantities, being lead the predominant one. The question then was: how to deal with it? A solution to our problems arose from phytoremediation. These methods offered an inexpensive answer, which is much more favourable than simply removing the ground. Both phytostabilisation and phyto-extraction require the use of specific plants to, in the first case stabilise the pollutants in the ground so that they don't spread (plants/trees with higher biomass work faster), and in the second case extract the pollutants through their roots and then remove them. Using these two methods we aimed for plants and trees that could have a future in production and could effectively solve the problems of our site. Therefore we chose poplar trees and planted them in strategic places (phytostabilisation) and a variety of plants with flowers for the production of honey and mustard plants to produce and sell a “Moscou-product” and, therefore, reusing the abandoned buildings and the materials we found on site.

## MUSTARD FLOWER

Mustard flowers are available year round.  
Height : 45 cm  
Depth of roots 15 cm

## SUNFLOWER

Seeds are planted 45 cm (1.5 ft.) apart and 2.5 cm (1 in) deep.  
Height : 1,5m - 3,5 m  
Depth of roots +80 cm

## LEAD ALPINE

PENNYCRESS  
Flowering time: May(-June)  
Height : 15 - 40 cm  
Depth of roots 15 cm

## REDCLOVER

It improves the fertility of the soil.  
Height : 20 - 80 cm  
Depth of roots 30 cm

## GRASS

The flowering panicles appear from May until June.  
Height : 10 - 70 cm  
Depth of roots 5 cm



37,5 %

.....→ **708,38 m<sup>2</sup>**

25 %

.....→ **472,25 m<sup>2</sup>**

12,5 %

.....→ **236,13 m<sup>2</sup>**

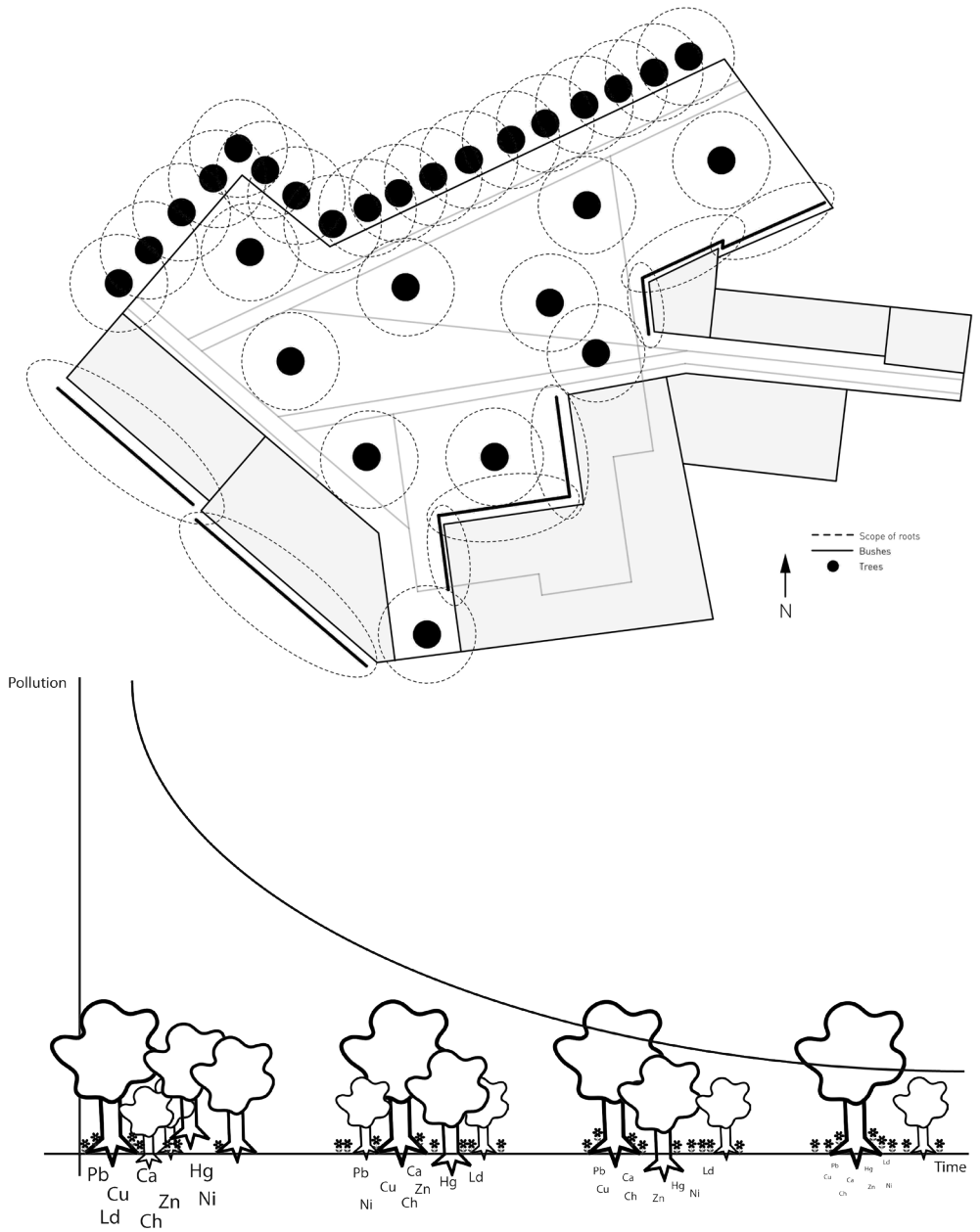
12,5 %

.....→ **236,13 m<sup>2</sup>**

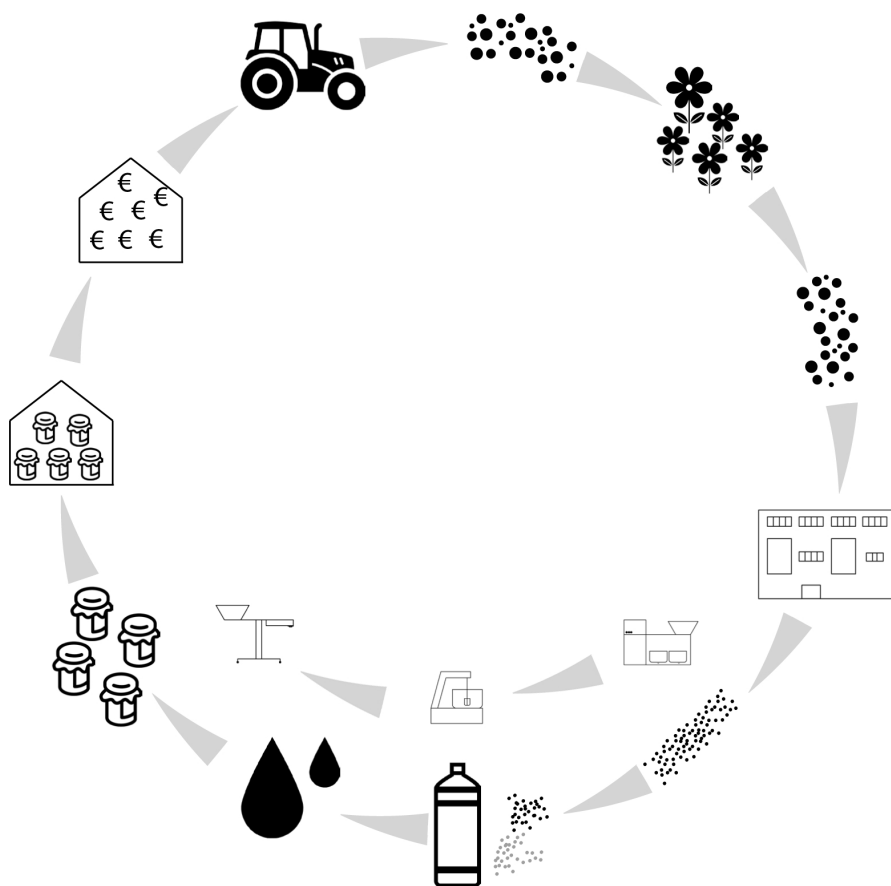
12,5 %

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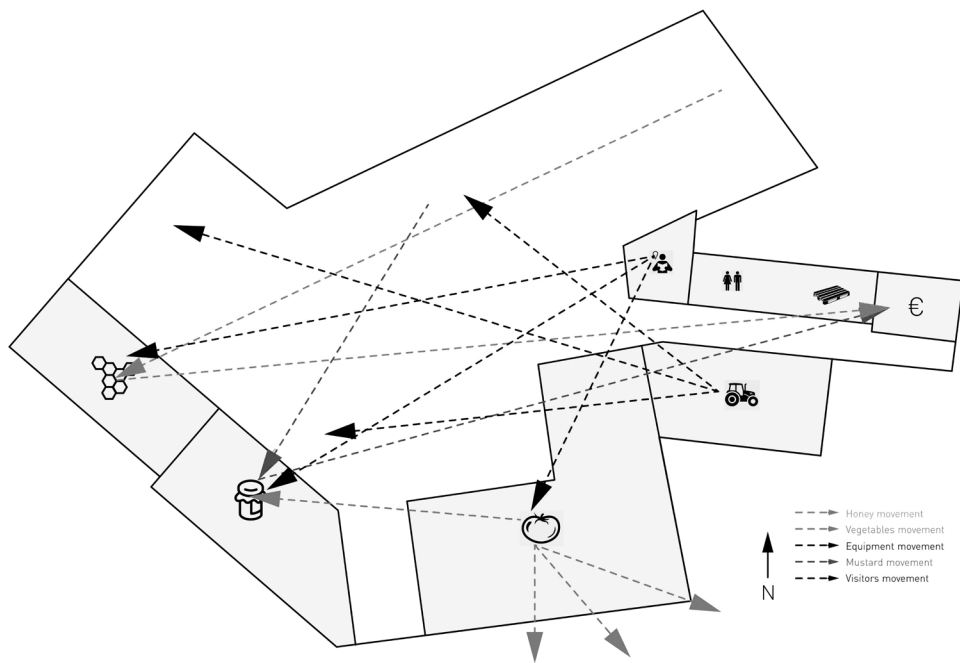
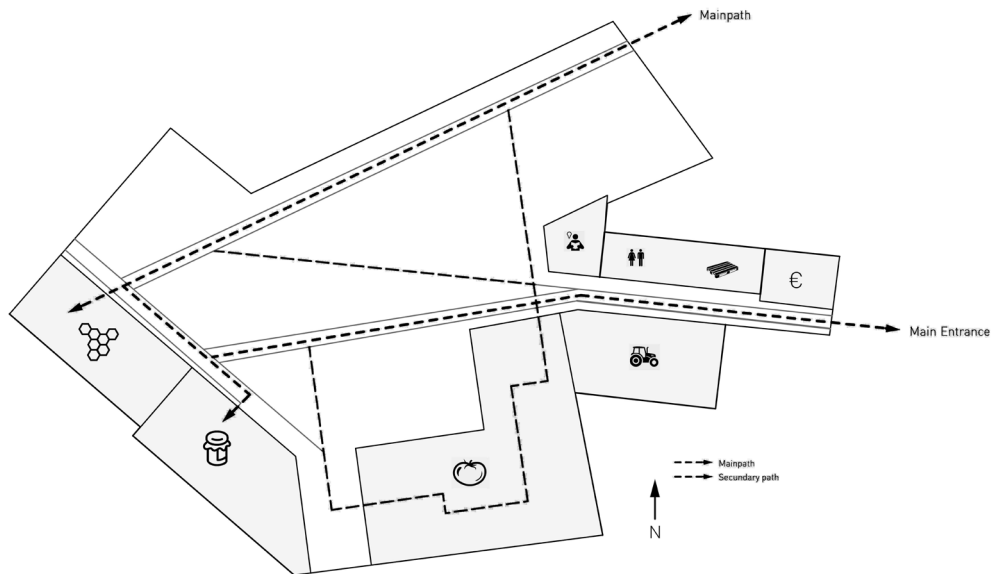
*Overview of used plants.*



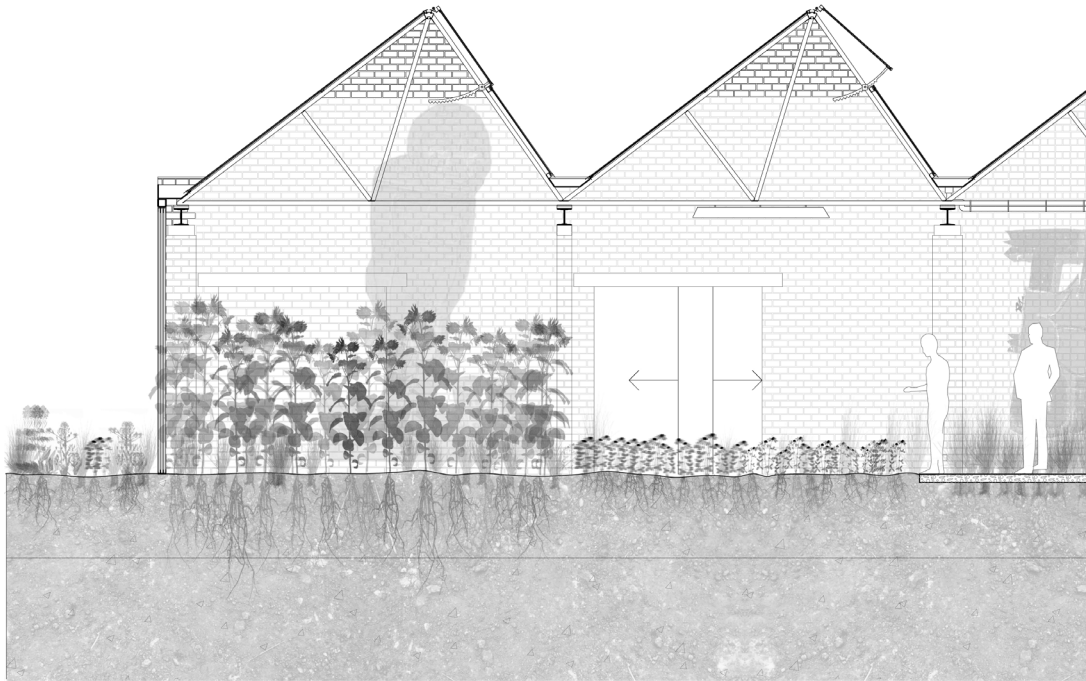
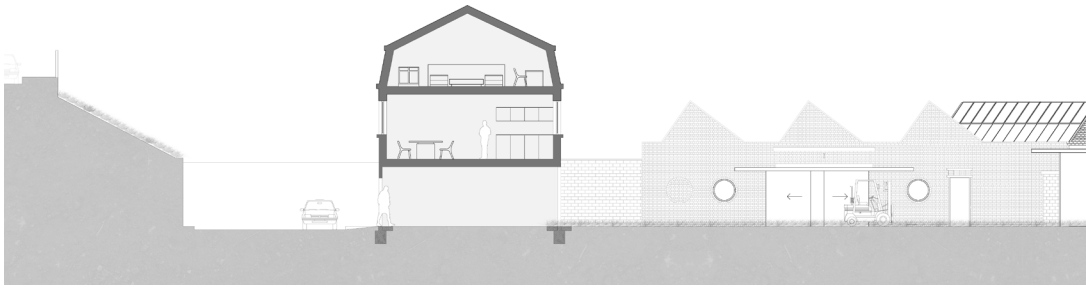
*Concept of biological filtering.*



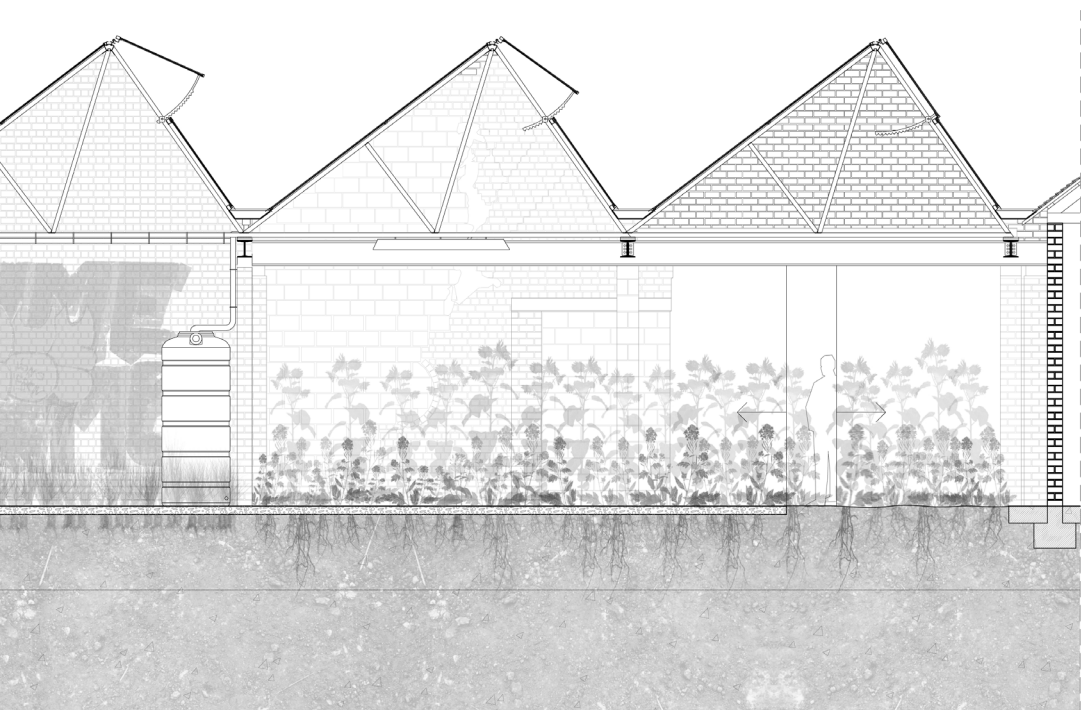
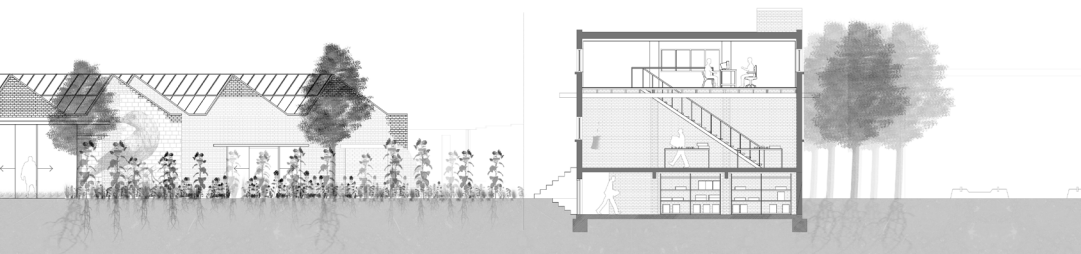
*Closed ecologic/economic cycle.*



*Function implementation.*



*Section view.*





Hannes Decanq  
Maroš Somora  
Marlies Struyf  
Ayush Kalra



*Acting in redundancy* stands for a sustainable project, respecting the identity and complexity of the place and the related social environment. Reading and understanding that place and its fragile essence leads to a fortification of this location on every layer. To find this place we analyse the city, in this case Ghent, on a macro level to identify the micro nodes on which we can act as architects.

*Ghent is a patchwork of colours and many grey scales wherein only exceptionally a white or black spot appears.'*<sup>1</sup> The city can be viewed as an organism wherein black spots are the most visual and obvious. These black spots (dis)appear through space and time, they are being developed anyway. So that's not our focal point. What does the city actually need? It's all about the grey. Thirty seven Percent of the houses in Ghent have no or low comfort. Derived from these figures, crisis can be considered as a continuous thing.

However, people come up with their own solutions. As an architect we should step into this process. Not as a creator but as participant or director. By zooming into the grey we identified this process and landed in the 'Dampoortwijk' in Ghent. The discrepancy between the street view and the life within the houses determined the contextual characteristics of this place. Within the last four years, population has grown by twenty seven percent. In the same time frame forty one percent of the houses changed owners.<sup>2</sup> Most of them are foreigners, considering this neighbourhood as their first stop in Belgium. As a result it has evolved into a passage area.

1. Dienst Stedenbouw en Ruimtelijke planning, *Ruimtelijk structuurplan gent*, 2003, Gent.

2. Stad Gent, *Gent in cijfers*, 2013, accessed 6 March 2013, <http://gent.buurtmonitor.be>.

The conditions inside the homes and the neighbourhood in general are density-related. Private inner space is limited and outer space is almost non existing and forestall people to provide in their basic needs such as trash storage and a place to dry their laundry. This might seem to be banal but it's impacting their quality of life. When confronted with this kind of site, it's a matter of attitude on how to approach it as an architect. Touching, renovating, the houses would set a gentrification process in motion. The fragility of this neighbourhood cannot be breached by outside forces.

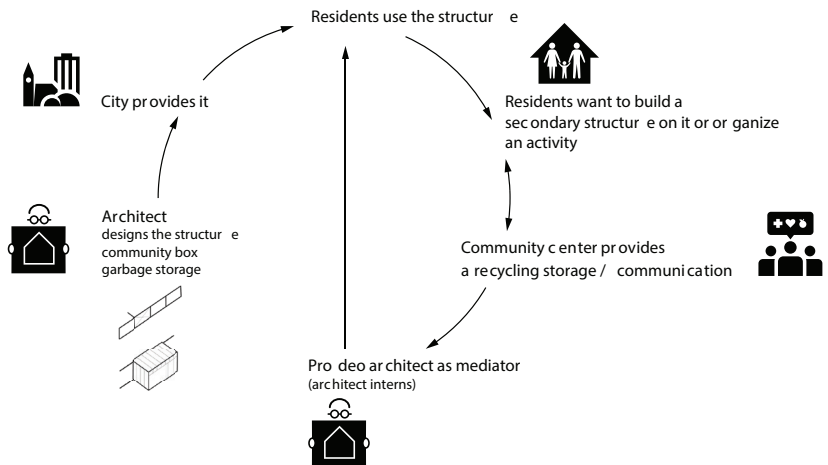
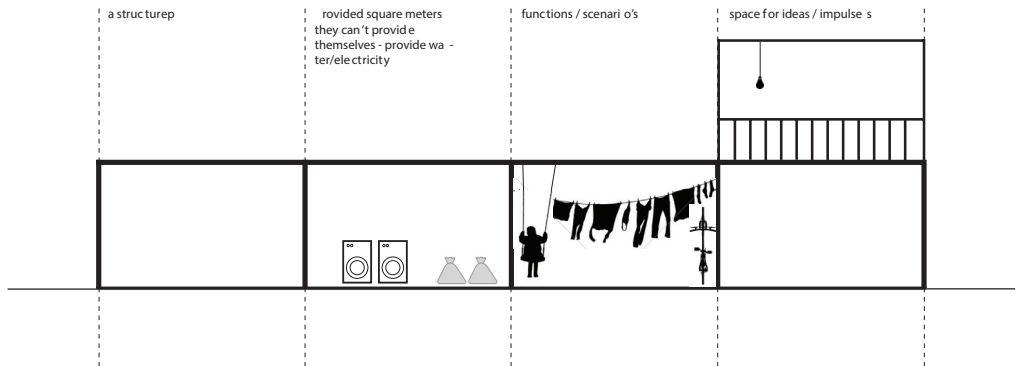
In the end it's all about the basic needs and this is where it is crucial to critically evaluate our role as an architect

### *The architectural program*

The lack of these basic needs usually translates itself in a lack of square meters. By mapping the use of square meters, general patterns of the life within this neighbourhood are revealed. Combined with the hard data of the square meters inside the houses and of the public space, we understand the utilization of individual and collective space. When we look at the former expansion of the homes, which started in the sixties, we distinguish the 'koterijen'. It was an extension at the private, backside of the house. The potential now lies within the streets, not only because people don't have any private garden or courtyard in this neighbourhood, but also due to the intrinsic quality of the collective space. By thickening the wall (facade), square meters are added at the front-side of the houses. While now the territory is divided on matters of property, it will evolve to a territorial system of use, in which we retrieve a more elaborate gradient of the individual and collective use of space. This extension of the living room, accompanied with square meters provided by the architect, will lead to an appropriation of the public space.

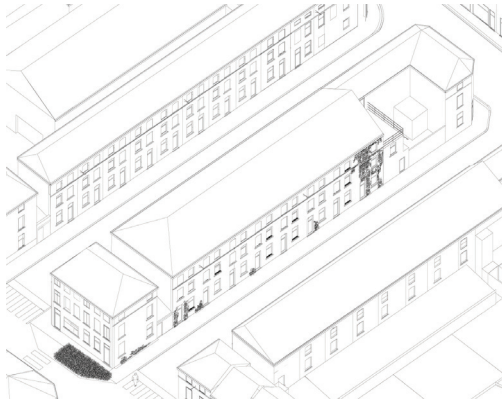
The architect provides a basic structure situated on the border of the sidewalk. This communal system allows functions to pop up on both sides of the structure. A broad range of new space with a gradient of individual and collective use is created. The structure though is attached to the houses. This has both a structural and psychological function. People will be able to relate to the structure. The communal box, which is located on the parking spots, raises awareness about the use of space. It enables a soft transition towards a car free zone. The structure appeals a certain use by the logic it has. It allows the life to happen there by stimulating functions, scenario's and space for impulses and ideas. The circulation routes of pedestrians and cars don't change drastically. The street will reflect the 'new' logic it has. Conflict of space will be reduced to a minimum.

So how will this function? After the hardware, we implement the software because the system needs to be fed. The city should provide the structure which the architect has designed. Residents are free to use this provided structure upon their needs. Adding secondary structures or organizing activities should occur in dialogue with the architect. We believe a pro-deo architect should guide the use of the structure, together with the community workers.

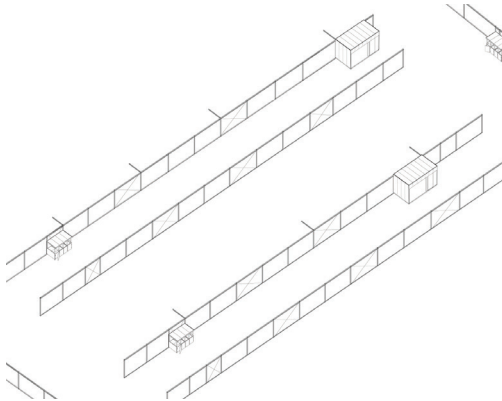


*Above: The structure – appeal a certain use by the logic it has.*

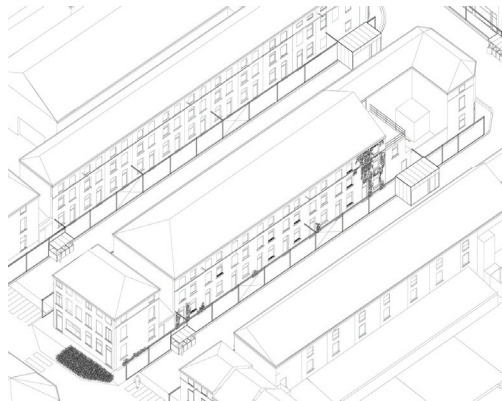
*Below: After the hardware, the software.*



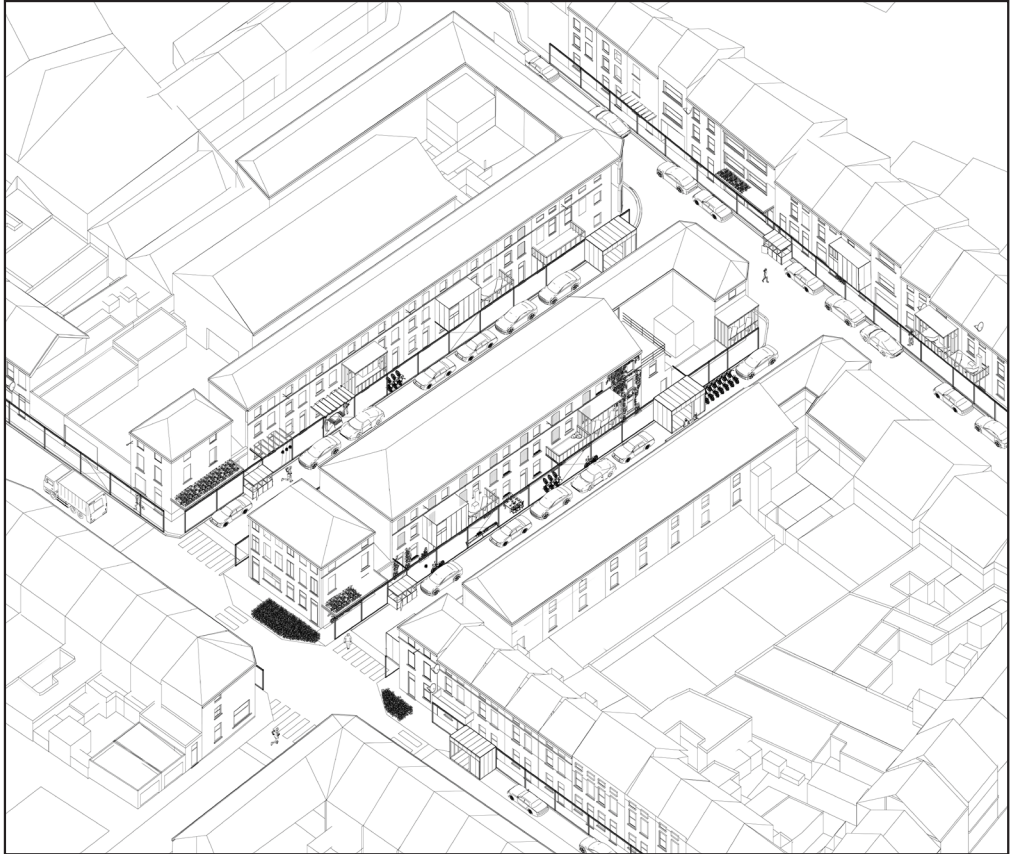
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*Top: Present situation: Neringstraat - Ambachtstraat, 9000 Ghent, Belgium, 2013*  
*Middle: Basic steel structure with collective elements: community box, garbage box*  
*Below: The structure on the border of the pavement*



*Axonometric view of the neighborhood, the life of the structure.*





*Picture of the model, the life of the structure.*

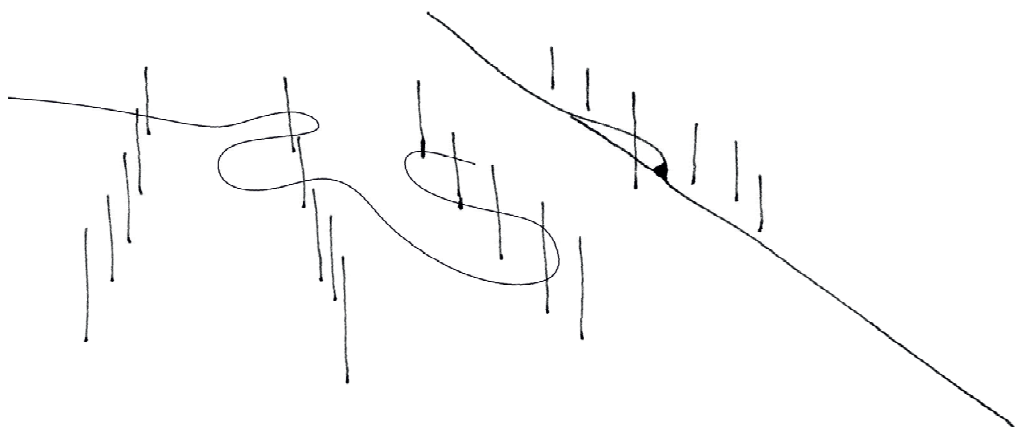






*Section of the Neringstraat, relation between inside and outside space.*

Eva Čápková  
Emilie Otté  
Kübra Elif Karaoğlu  
Michel Jeursen



*Equilibrium – a state in which opposing forces or influences are balanced with the movement of a user.*

The Meierij is an island defined by the railway on one side and a natural border on the other side. In this way the island is shut off and tedious detours have to be made by the islanders to complete their daily tasks. Outsiders on the other hand never get to experience the intrinsic and peaceful character of this place as they are not aware of its presence. The site has two different faces.

On the island we're working in a very defined space, that is the beauty and the quality of the space. Not defined by action, but by infrastructure. Because of the current direction there's no discovery of the ordinary, the space is not recognized because we are approaching it in the wrong direction. The seclusion of the space creates a mystery between the two faces of the site. By designing a movement in the opposite direction we're creating an entirely different understanding and appreciation for the place. The *rapprochement* has shifted.

The design uses only what is necessary so the space is not overused. A single tunnel breaks the railway boundary, a bridge breaks the natural boundary. When you come out of the tunnel you see the scenery of the 'hidden' space. The tunnel is not only 'a promise' to a beautiful place, it also gives direction plus the possibility to go on, taking a walk across the site and over the water. The tunnel is a full mass around you whereas the bridge is creating a virtual air structure that is surrounding you, they are opposites although having the same function.

With the suspended bridge we are adding infrastructure but it does not have the language of it. It is infrastructure and mobility but in a non-mechanical way. The pulpit-effect of the bridge is creating a totally new and different relationship between the space and its user. We are now giving a feeling of the space, it's not about bare infrastructure, it's about what it does with the space. The lightness of the steel structure is a priority because the movement is the design. The design is the motion, the flow of people.

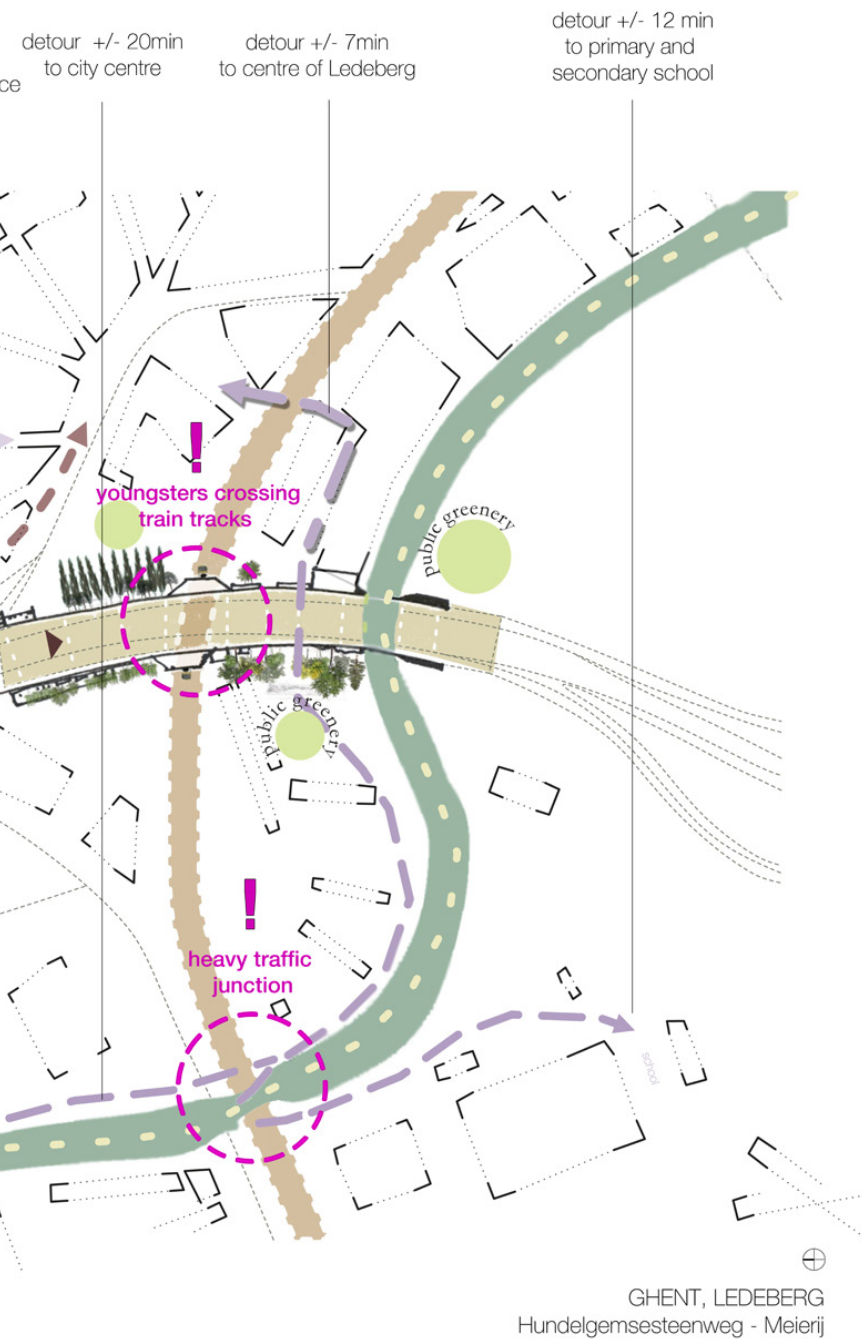
We could say the design is much like a decorum of a play: on itself it doesn't say much, but when people start to move it comes to live.

St. Lieven Church Ledeberg

proposed line of commerce



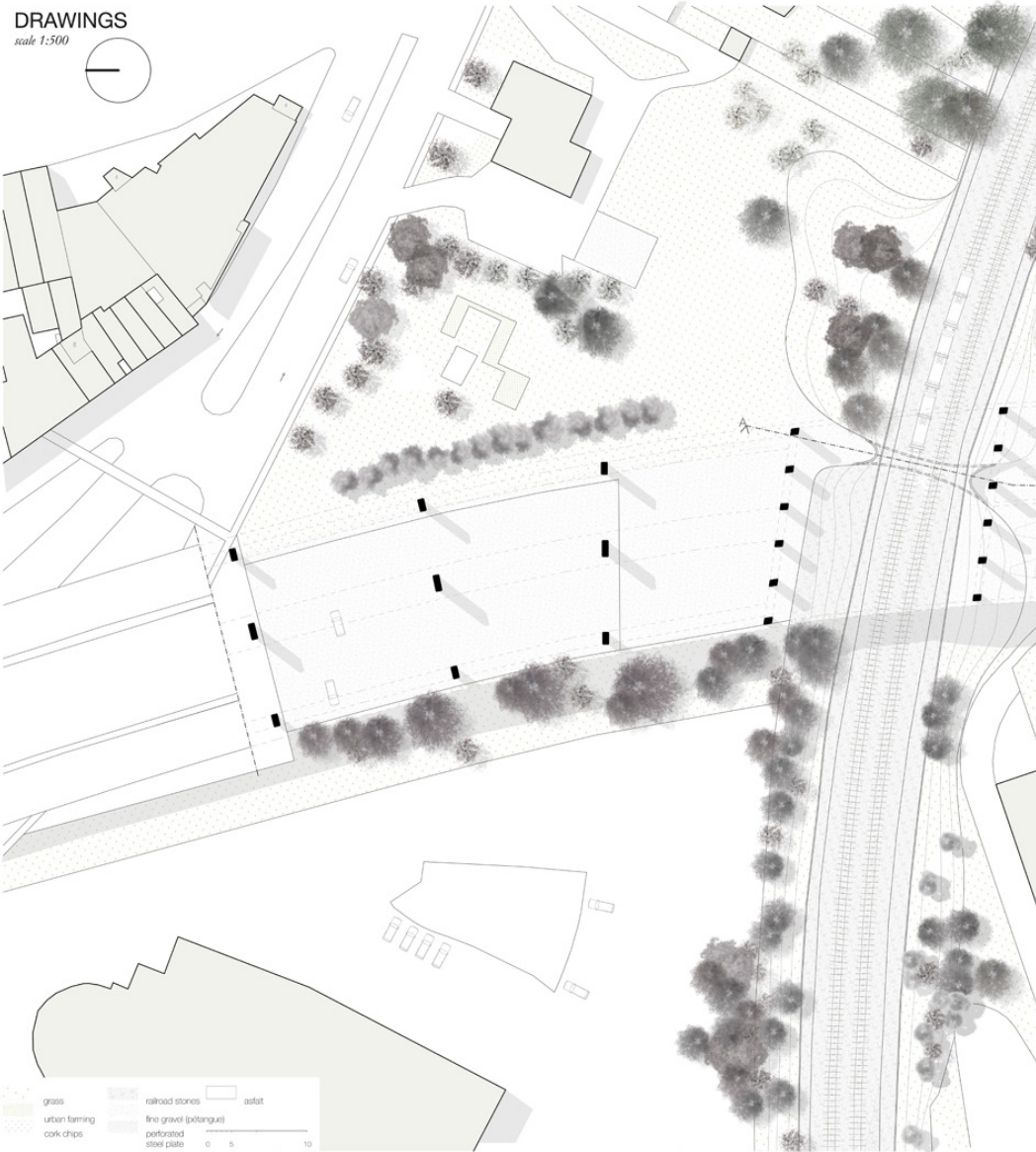
*The essence. Revealing the non-space.*





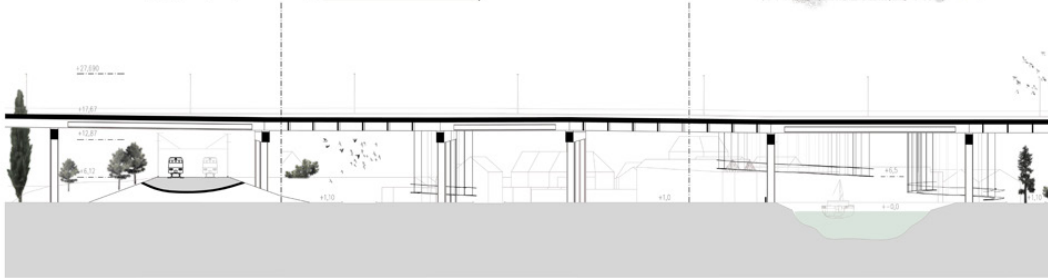
DRAWINGS

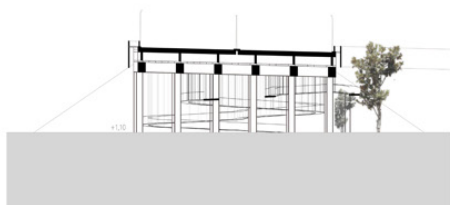
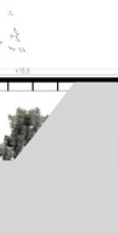
scale 1:500



- grass
- urban farming
- cork chips
- railroad stones
- fine gravel (pitouque)
- perforated steel plate
- outfit

0 5 10





B

C

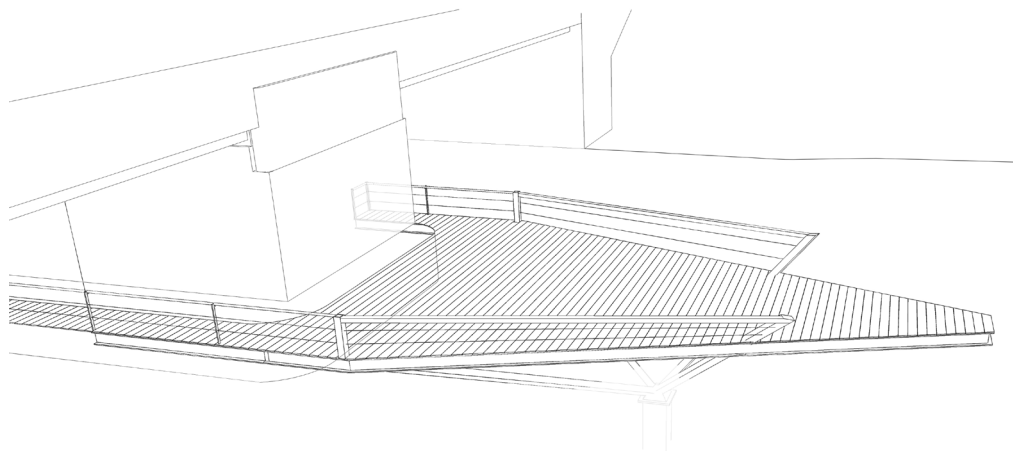




*"to design a path of discovery, to give recognition by placing  
tunnel and bridge in order to give connectivity to user"*



Nissim Geron  
Laura McLeod  
Thore Lewyllie  
Evangelos Stavrakakis



The St. Lievensbrug project takes place in a multi-layered traffic junction where the city ring R40 crosses underneath the B401 highway branch into the city. Situated in this *overfunctionalised* space, underneath the bridge lies the endpoint of an island. Seen as a dark backside together with the underside of the road bridge, this place was discovered as a place with specific qualities concerning sound and light. The light reflections of the water onto the bridge, the sound echoes of the car traffic. It is almost like the space offers itself to be a place of reflection, a hidden oasis of individual experience in the middle of a hectic environment.

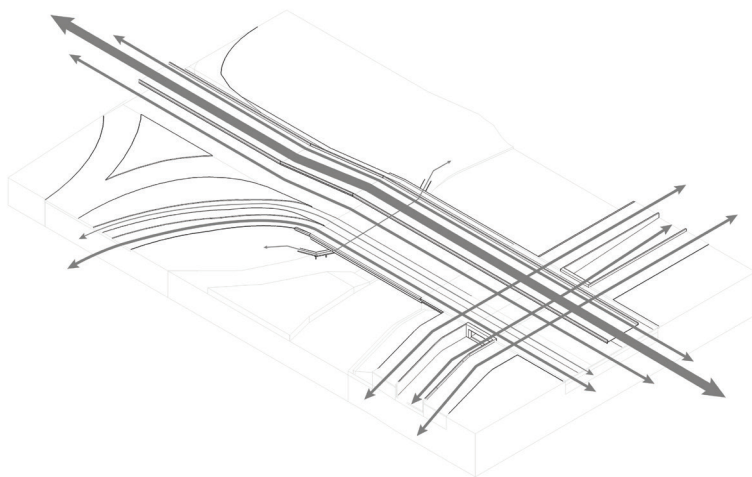
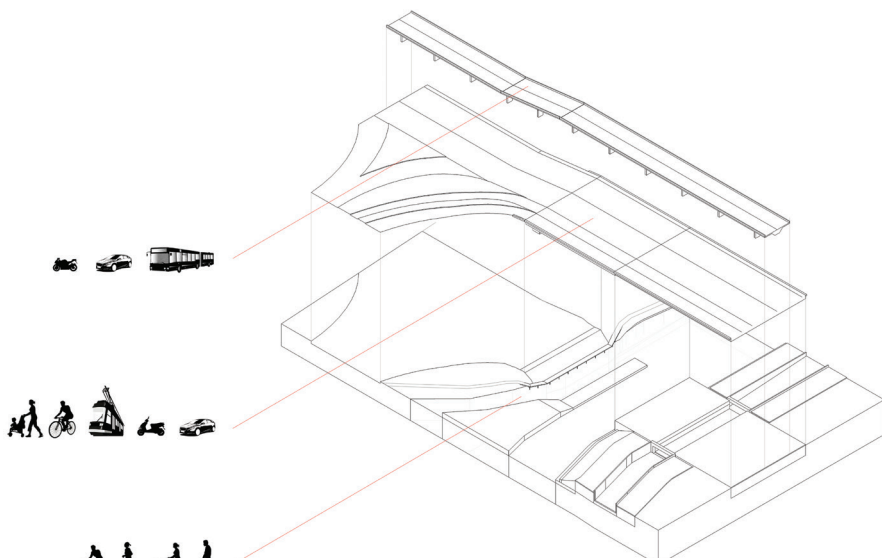
This concept translated into a wooden walkway, constructed around the fundamentals of the bridge. With a small extension the pedestal is made accessible to make the atmosphere underneath the bridge perceivable to the public. On the far end, pointing out to the water, is a platform which tightens into one point. This point has the exact width of one person. It forms a specific standing position focussed on the individual experience. This platform creates a hidden place for retraction, of which the journey towards it is equally as important as the endpoint. The night condition, when there is specific lighting on the underside of the bridge, is also an important part of this idea.

To conclude; What this proposal does, is to search for the qualities in a place where you would normally not want to be, which seems to be a disconnected and dark backside, and offer an opportunity for a different experience of that place. A *defunctionalised* resting point, in an *overfunctionalised* movement.

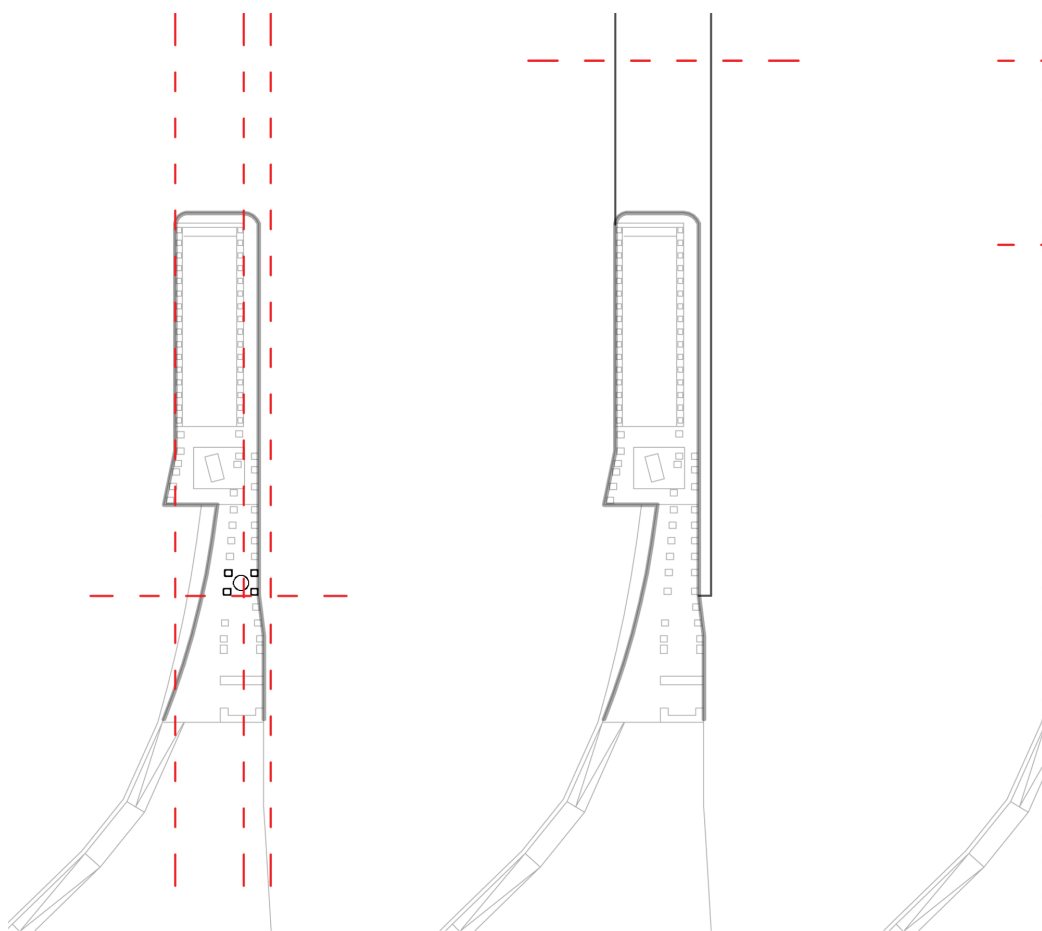




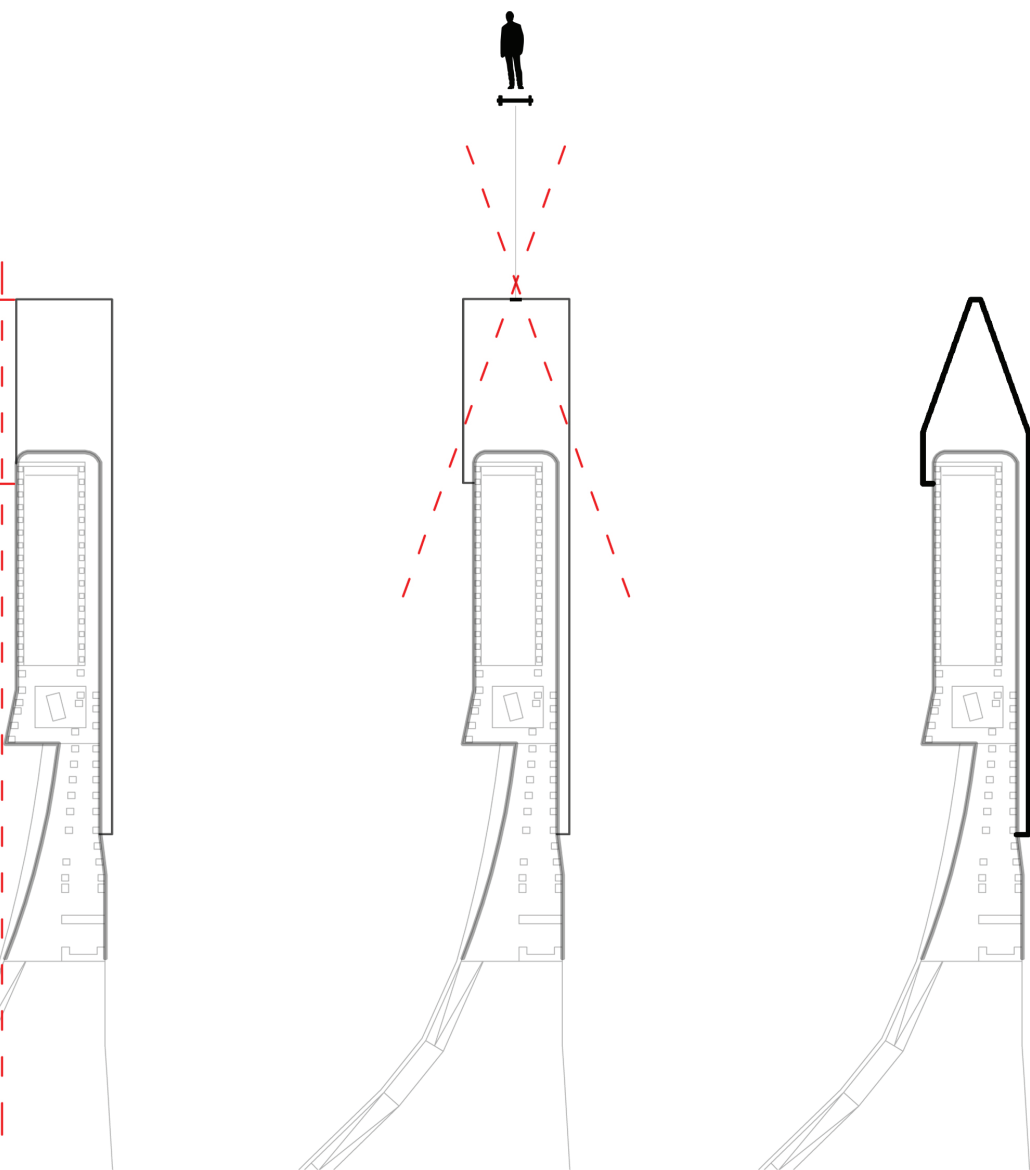
*Over functionalised – Levels. transport, velocity. Specific atmosphere.*



*Over functionalised – Levels. transport, velocity  
Movement/Passing, chaos, continuing.*



*Progress of forming the walkway.*







*Final image, the walkway with endpoint for 'individual experience'.*



Minna Hulkkonen

Donald Hunter

Stephanie Van Lembergen



Every city has an infrastructural map which shows the available, regulative routes through the urban fabric. Besides that, there is also something like a 'mental map'; this is a personal map drafted by the person itself. It originates from experiences and an individual bond or association with a certain place. The angle of this project was to continue on this mental map, which in a certain way, offers a key to a freer interpretation and experience of a city. Especially the seemingly contradiction of giving back freedom through the design should get an appropriate answer. The project wasn't necessarily an exercise in doing less, but on finding a balance on what (not) to do, and this in every aspect of the design. It's a search for responsibility, a position that we want take as future architects. First, we searched a place. The obvious weak spots, recognized by the City of Ghent, should be avoided. It was indeed the intention to act from a potential quality which was already intrinsically present, but not yet used or distinct from an existing problem. After walking through Ghent we could only establish how densely built Ghent actually is. The number of open spaces with the potential of rediscovery were barely noticeable from a pedestrians point of view. That's why we simultaneously searched for a place on infrastructural maps. Like many other medieval cities, Ghent consists of complex street pattern, confined by building blocks enclosing open space. Over time those centers of the building blocks have been privatized and became a hotchpotch of 'koterijen' and other weird constructions in a fight to conquer extra living space and light. Very often they have become completely unreachable for the public. However, in the western part of 19th century Ghent, there used to be a lot of monasteries who had, and still have, secluded though open gardens. Because of this, our second walk through Ghent was more effective. Is there an access to these open spaces, and if yes, where are they? Eventually we found the answer in the smallest ramification of the street pattern. Some alleys in Ghent gave access to these building blocks but mostly they led to an unfortunate dead end. At the same time, however, these alleys stimulated certain ideas of what could or could have been there, because of its oblivion.

Thick brick walls with a green haze of moss, peeling concrete cladding, glassless windows and rusted doors. These are in fact the ruins of Ghent. The blind alleys and the promise of an underlying space, never redeemed itself in any way, combined with the tension of a potential discovery of a place, brought a lot of frustration with it. Because of that, the project became a story of accessibility and boundaries. How can you make something attainable without destroying it's fragile character. How do you stimulate a dream, and in the mean time giving it enough freedom so a place can obtain a certain meaning. And also on a practical base, how do you watch over the border between the public and the private? Not only the approach was important, but also the proximity of the private domain and time and matter. The loss of one of these aspects would prejudice the whole.





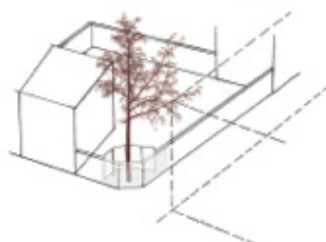
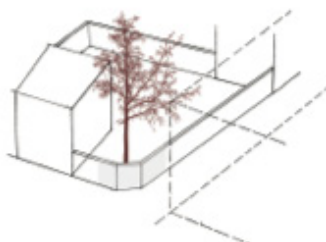
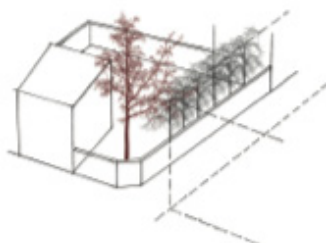
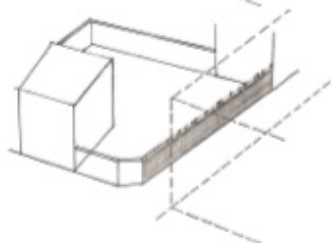
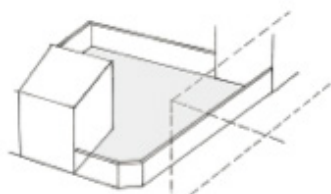


### ***From location to essence***

In the Iepensteeg, a side street of the Coupure, there is a very high, uninviting yet intriguing brick wall which is part of the completely neglected villa on the 'Coupure Rechts'. It seems to be a contradiction: uninviting yet intriguing, but it's actually not. The specific function or meaning of a ruin is often not longer readable whereby everyone has the freedom to fill in the void themselves. Because of the freedom of interpretation, one will get closer involved. At the same, often because of its scale, they can be intimidating and repellent. Oddly enough this factor, given its proximity of a private domain, was a welcome quality. Making the space behind the wall accessible by putting an opening in it wouldn't make this space more meaningful. Instead of reaching a new balance, it would just erase the border between public and private. In order to become a meaningful place, we have to release a part of the dream and the promise of what's behind that wall. Preferably in a way where it takes effort to discover this 'half' truth. This way one would appreciate it more than when it would be cast into their laps.

To know when and where to intervene, we have to discover the essence or genius loci of a place. This research, including trial and error, seemingly is very simple. The trap to immediately start designing was pretty huge but by designing we only add stuff: A becomes B. 'Acting in redundancy' actually means that A is already B, or: B is inextricably attached to A, like a derivative. In other words, there is no need for additions. In the case of the Iepenstraat, the essence was hiding in the name of the street. Behind the wall, there where it goes around the corner and makes the connection between the Iepenstraat and Coupure, there is a remarkably impressive tree. The ever red foliage is visible from a far distance and contrasts with the environment. The relation between the tree, the wall, the private garden and the alley offered the ideal framework to create a public, intimate place. This now 'just' had to be (architecturally) shaped.



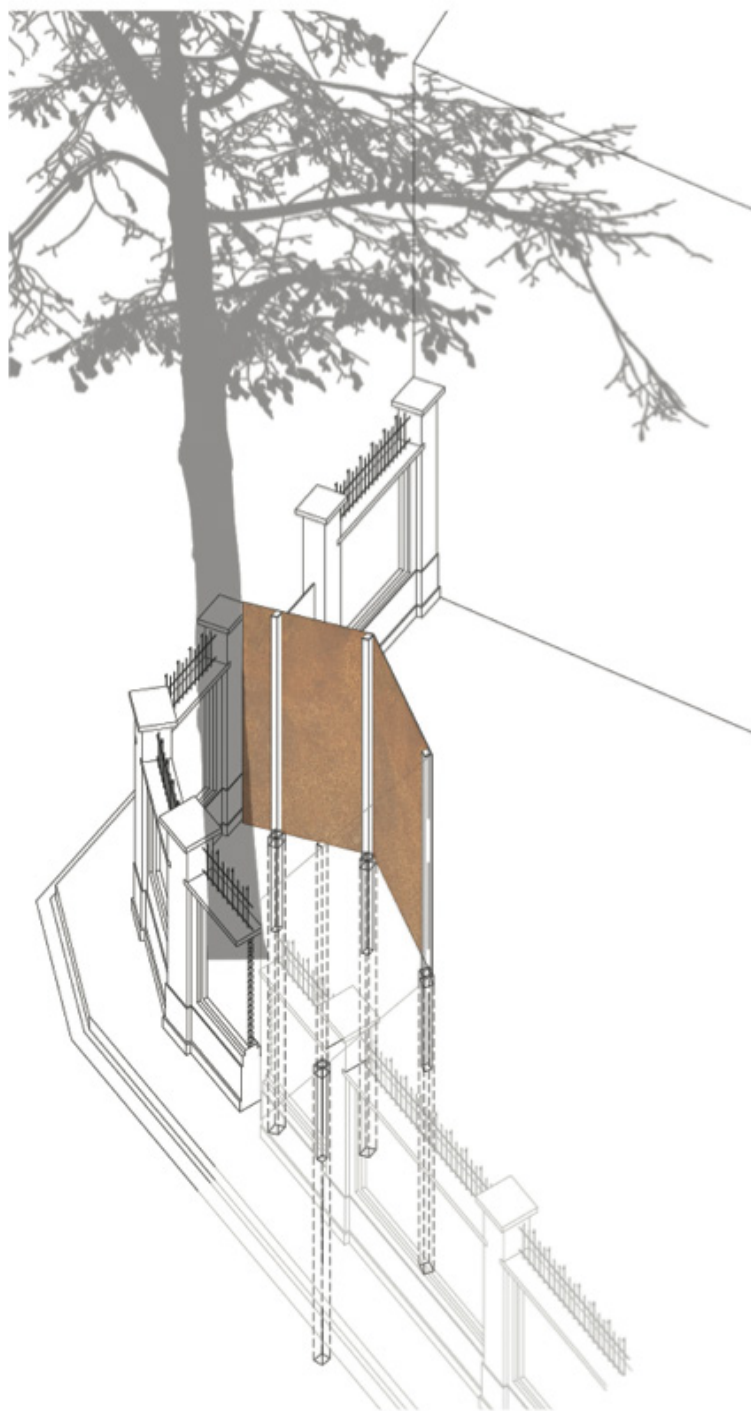


### ***From essence to architecture***

We searched on how to deal with these relations through sketches and models. It turned out pretty soon that a freestanding side behind the wall, reacting to it's shape, originated in an interesting spot. This doesn't conclude the story though. Even the smallest detail had to be worked out, since detailing could break or strengthen that story. Both in materiality and construction methods we searched for a logic resulting in what was already there. The corten steel of the freestanding side had various benefits. It referred to the weathering already visible on the wall. The gate and the fence on the wall were also in steel. And this corten steel can be extremely thin dimensioned. This would enhance the tension between the thick wall, the enclosed though public event around the tree and the adjacent private garden. The construction itself had to take the roots of the tree into account. On the other hand it also had to stand as freely as possible. Cracks and crevices aroused curiosity and gave a sight from public to private and vice versa. This way the dream could (partially) continue.

Thus we worked with this initial frustration: this will only be partially redeemed so an idea can be constituted about what this place means.

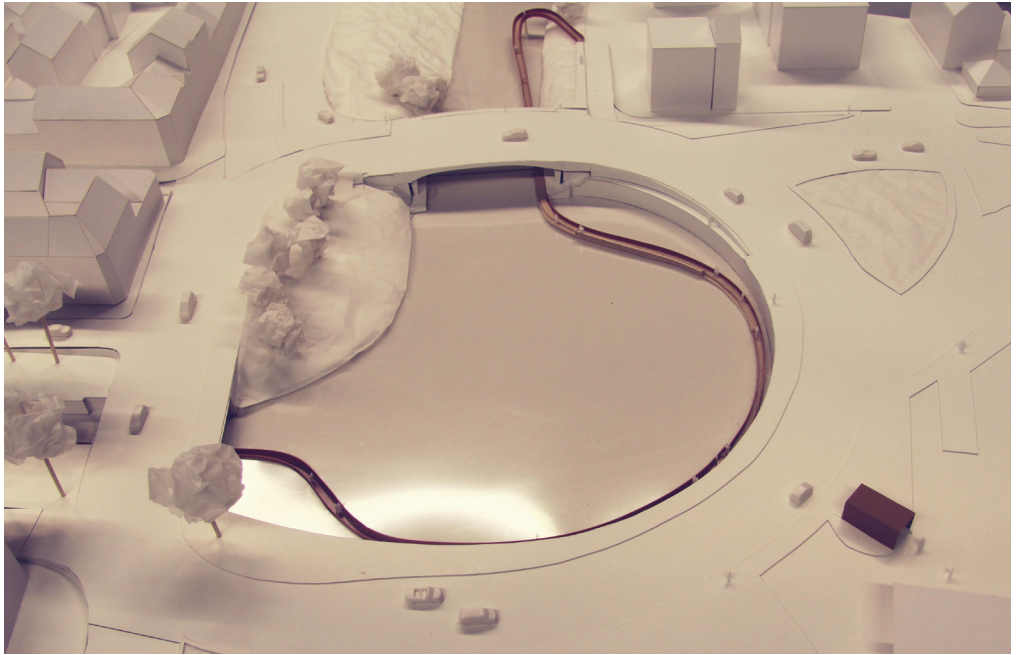
In every other project, where the starting point is to design, one could get a certain satisfaction of working out their own vision. The question is how sustainable this is in the end. What is the extent to which we really answer the question of a place. Every step itself has to be questioned and reduced to the essence that seems to grow independent of the designer and his intentions, but in fact is a logical consequence of the analysis. This attitude of doing 'only the essential' is extremely valuable, especially when taking an existing situation into account. That what's given is the most grateful source of inspiration and is the backbone of something new that in a sense has always been there.



Marine Pirenne  
Mateusz Szymanowski  
Elze Schuurman  
Michala Lietavová







*Model, overall image. The line of the walkway with tunnel entrance.*

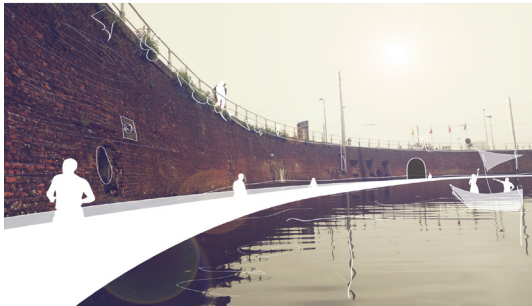
We will take you on a journey through our design, starting at the entrance in front of Dampoort station and provide you with a safe passage across the Oktrooiplein. The entrance to the new path is covered with perforated corten steel. By closing the façade to the north and south and opening the façades to the west and east, we are visually guiding you to the three towers of Ghent.

When you have chosen to descend to the 'draaikom', you can go left on the corten steel walkway leading towards the city, or choose to take a break and calm down on our wooden pathway to the right.

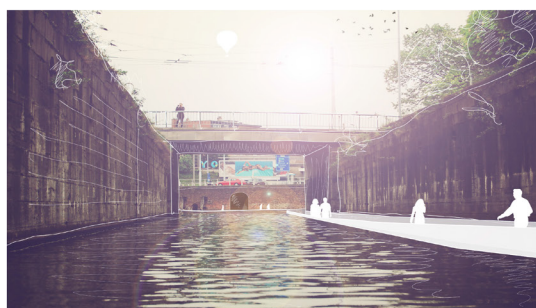
The corten steel walkway is being designed to be the more logical route, leading the majority of pedestrians efficiently from A to B. By using steel, which is a cold material, it will lead you on your way without asking attention to touch it or to stand still and feel the place. This route will first go below the water level, so that the water can be experienced from up close. Because the lowered pathway hides the passing pedestrians from view, they don't form a distraction for the people on the wooden route. When you have passed under the bridge the pathway will lead up towards the city and ends in a calm and safe environment. The opposed route, where it is more important to experience the surroundings than to go somewhere, we used the more tangible material wood. This will give you a natural possibility to stand or sit down and take your time to feel this special space. We felt that the wooden pathway could provide a different way to experience the surrounding water. By making the pathway float it will rock a bit, when you walk over it. We use light that shines from under the pathway on the surrounding walls, to make the movement of the water visible on the wall. The wooden path ends under the bridge. Due to the special acoustics and reflections of the water, this spot gives you the impression of being somewhere else than standing under one of the busiest roundabouts of Ghent.

This is not a space but more a very unusual place.





*Collage of impressions and atmospheres.*



Thibaut Luyten  
Lauwers Louise  
Zuzevicate Indre  
Mikel Fernandez  
Ivana Linderová



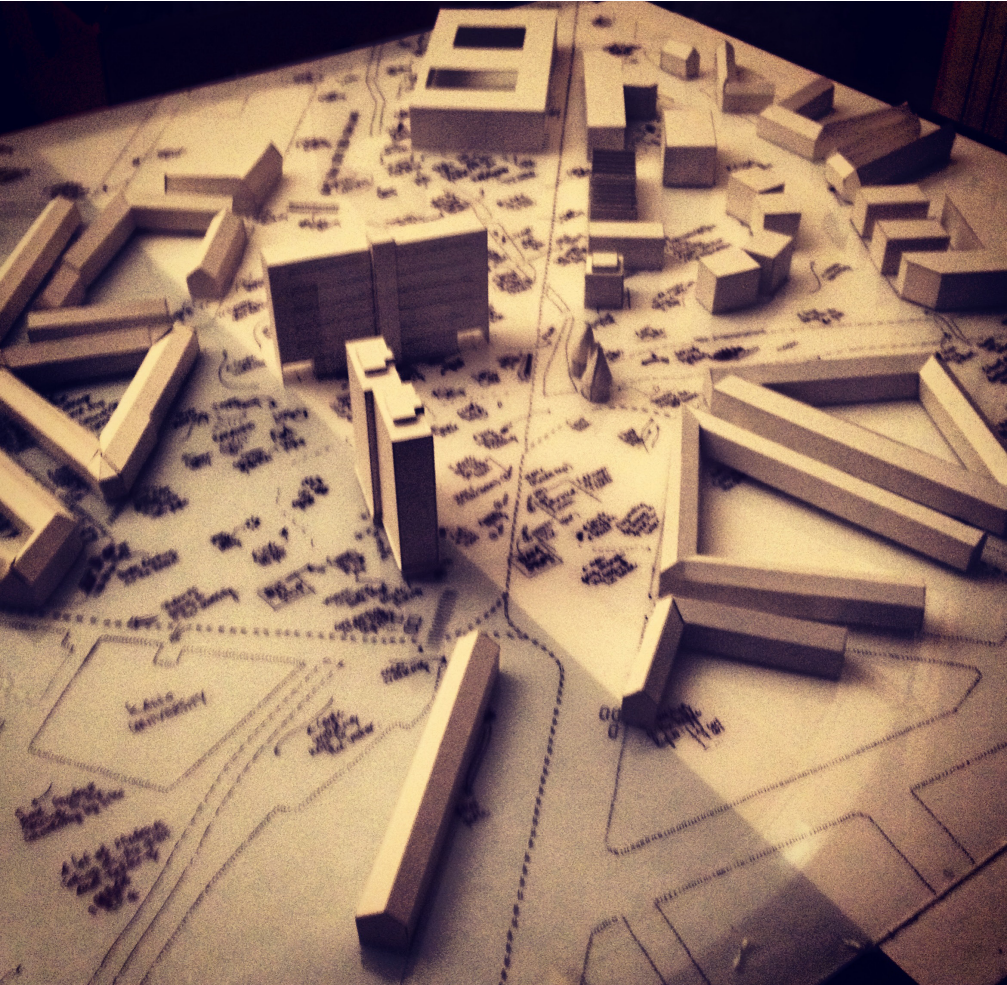
This project is located in a crosspoint of three major movements. First, we have the pedestrian traffic from Dampoort station towards the city centre. Secondly there is the boat traffic on the rivers Leie and Scheldt, that pass by the site on both sides. Third we have car traffic parallel to the water that is located at the front of the site. This location is one of the oldest places of the 'city' Ghent. It was created on this spot as it is a the crosspoint of the (back in those days) two main rivers in Belgium for trade movement. This gave us a very big responsibility towards acting fragile in order to keep this history present today. The site contains a partly abandoned building from the 70s. As it was designed within the modernistic idea, the result is a vertical building with an open space around it for the people. Though originally planned as a green open space, it has been built as a parking, as if the whole building is put on a pedestal. The parking is at most two meters higher than the streets around it. This height difference generates a strong mental and physical barrier towards the building. Because of the platform, the area around falls apart in disconnected zones with totally different atmospheres. Many people have described this building as 'the ugliest one in Ghent' because it doesn't fit here and has no relation to its context.

Our main intention is to eliminate this barrier and to integrate the existing building into the adjacent urban fabric, using the existing opportunities of the building (structure) and surroundings (location). We also want to act carefully on the larger urban scale, and tried to make this building future-proof by focusing on three different levels: Approach from surroundings; Integrate building in adjacent urban fabric; Interior/ exterior relation.

As the history of this place has been erased when this tower was built in the 70's, we didn't want the same to happen. So we decided to keep the existing structure and to adapt it to the future needs. By giving the former *Belgacom tower* a new function (urban farm), adjusting the connection to the neighbourhood (connection with park and houses by erasing the physical and mental barriers), adding a marked place under the 'brutalist' backside of the building, we believe this building could become 'accepted' in its surroundings.



Amy Menu  
Marzieh Mazrouei S.  
Connor Steven  
Clàudia Carreras



“Improving quality of life no longer depends only on economic growth, but the sense of community and the way they relate to each other are of a great importance.”

The Rabot towers in Gent, built in 1960s, located in a multicultural neighbourhood of mainly Arabs, Turks and Moroccans. Mainly occupied by families barely surviving above the poverty line, this is an area in dire need of change. The towers are iconic in their own form, yet sited isolated, forgotten and disconnected from the city of Ghent. Upon first glance, they seem oppressive, overpowering and ignorant to the social context where they find themselves crashed upon.

*But, are the towers the real problem of this neighbourhood?*

*Have the residents isolated themselves from the community?*

*Is it the architectural style which is troubling?*

*Or is it the connection to the adjacent neighbourhood, and the centre of Ghent?*

We started a long journey to try and unravel this mystery prominent in the area, and tried to provide a suitable solution in order to criticise the solutions given by the local authorities, which is to simply demolish the towers and build again. But, is the best solution to try and erase the past?

Today, buildings of a modernist and brutalist form are most vulnerable as they have little protection in the heritage listing, compared to their classical and baroque counterparts. The idea of heritage and style is forever changing, and we believe that they deserve as much protection; for new generations to experience.

In an era where the sustainable baton is being waved in the air by politicians and official sectors, we call it into question; what is exactly the sustainable approach to begin solving the problems of the Rabot region? So we firstly revised the masterplan of the area, dealing with the land and its properties, water flow, connection axis, the fast and slow access to the site and existing human activities. And further on we provided answers to the questions asked in order to improve and upgrade the region in the context of the Rabot towers. The main design approach was set in order to improve the ‘connection’ between people,

surrounding, neighbourhoods, and in general the whole city of Gent, so the proposal was arranged in 5 layers of interventions:

1) *Green*: firstly we researched the existing green elements in the site, vegetation study and further expansion of the existing vegetation types to explore the potential of the land to be one of the breathing points of the city in terms of green spaces. The intention is to make this layer more opening and proposing.

2,3) *water and history*: In accordance with the urban approach of the city of Gent, we have studied this historic layer by old maps and exploring existing water flows. We proposed re-opening the water canal which on one hands, connects the both sides of the site and integrates the Rabot site in Gent urban structure. On the other hand, the water circulations rejuvenates the region both ecologically and aesthetically. We foresee that this proposed connection brings back the vitality of the site and allows the tourist boats and Kayak riders to circulate in the region in continuation of the tour they have through the water flow structure in Ghent. The decisions made during the design process have always been in accord with the historical maps and the way the city has developed in time.

4) *Social layer*: Study of the existing human activities and the functionality of the site along with the expectations from it were the principle parts defining this layer. By opening up the ground floors of the towers to communal space, we were able to improve the connections on the ground and create an invitation for people from outwit the block to engage with the residents and facilities.

5) *Circulation layer*: Limiting the car movement in the site by altering the traffic flow to the new ring road which is planned in the new structural plan of the city would both reduce the pollution in the region and enrich the neighbourhood by more green space, pedestrian pavement and enhancing the social interaction. Thus this layer can be called the overlapping layer stitching everything together on the site.



## *Conclusion*

The Rabot Towers are icons with cultural significance and they deserve to be defined in a new setting. Through the process of the design proposal, we believed that these buildings should be a celebration instead of a bother and can be perceived alike. The challenge was not to look at one aspect that has given the area a negative identity, but to improve the connections between all the elements that make up this unique town. When you start at the individual person and slowly zoom out, you start to unravel the whole picture.

We set out to improve:

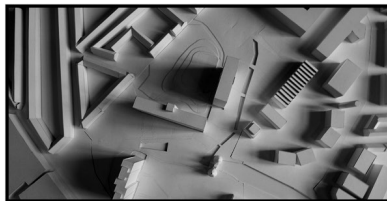
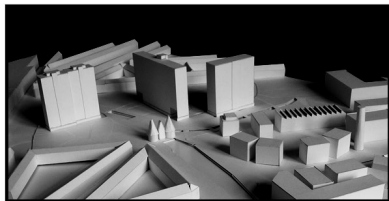
*The connections between the people;*

*The connection to their immediate landscape;*

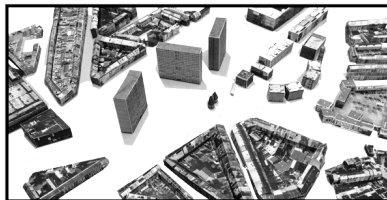
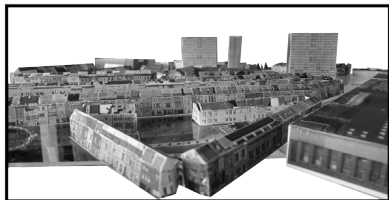
*The connection to the Rabot neighbourhood;*

*The connection to Ghent.*

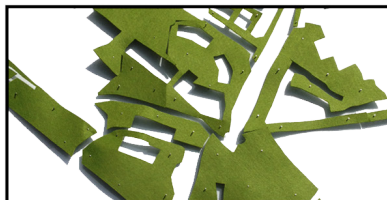
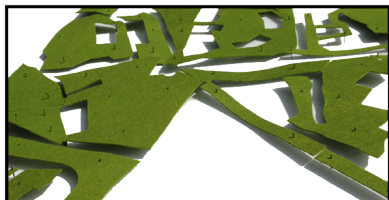
LAYER #01      *the tengage environment*



LAYER #02      *typologies*



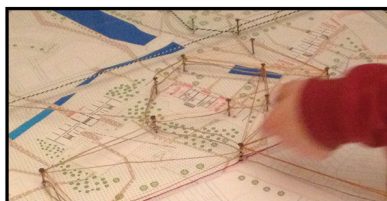
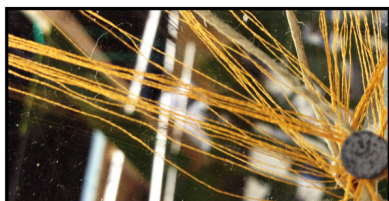
LAYER #03      *green connections*



LAYER #05      *activities*



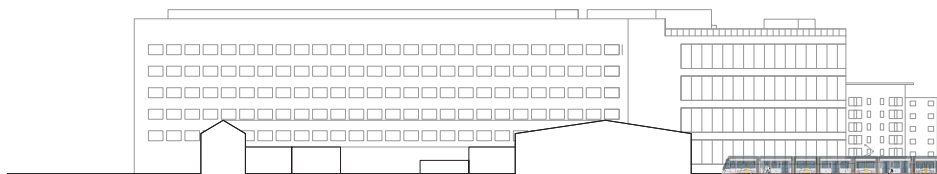
LAYER #06      *landmarks*





*Reinterpreting the surrounding green carpet.*





*The implementation of the masterplan:  
Recreating the concept of the towers surrounded by a green carpet.*



Bruno Van de Calseyde  
Laure Decaigny  
Aditya Nuz Pradhana  
Georgios Ioannou









*Model showing the sequence of parks.*

The Ekkergermsite, located next to the St. Martinus Church has been on the border of Ghent for ages. Many things have changed since then, but the main character remained in a way. A long research on Ekkergerm, the people living there, the characteristics of the place but also on the social, economic and ecological systems resulted in an understanding of the essence of the place. The essence actually wasn't more than realising that the place just needed 'a little push in the back' to become that meeting point, where social interaction is possible.

Thanks to the visual and physical relations between the different parts of our area we could *act in redundancy*. This was done by correlating 3 areas (the Church, the previous court and the back-garden), keeping the original identity of the places. We can differentiate 3 layers:

*The communal collective space*

Is meant for the local inhabitants. On this land people can grow vegetables and fruits. In the communal centre they can freely use the kitchen to cook and eat together.

*The communal public space*

Is seen as a transition zone where the communal centre could be. Where there is a park and access to the road and to the collective garden (and the future public functions).

*The 'public' space*

Is the space next to the church and next to the road. It is seen from the road and can be interpreted as the 'Gateway to Ekkergerm' (and to our site).

These 3 layers are those that could and definitely will bring the people of Ekkergerm together. This is the main need of this place (So concludes our research, discussions and analyses). Keeping as much as possible qualities and adding the least possible was a challenge for us. But in the end we think we managed to create a simple, obvious and sustainable intervention.

Amaia Torres Piñeiro  
Michiel Van Marcke  
Inse Vanneuville  
Sandro Govaert



An old malt house (late 1800's) appeared to be hidden behind big gates, fences and other buildings on a walk through Ghent. Once we got closer we saw its distinctive façade, the surprise of stumbling onto this characteristic site certainly got our attention.

The building is placed in the middle of a city block, between two streets: the active and commercial Sleepstraat and the passive and residential Kartuizerlaan. The city block in which the malt house is located was enclosed by fences and big walls, even though there was plenty of open unused space inside the block. Leaving us no choice but to have the entire city block as our site with the malt house as epicentre. In this way the historical building gives the possibility to bring both parties together but also to separate them.

Urban porosity is the key element. We want to guide the people through their city blocks. A promenade of guidelines, sequences and a climax. To create this breathing urban block we started to 'take away' rather than 'to add'. Obstacles disappeared. A neighbouring school was pulled into the movement by extending its playground with a direct connection to the active part of the site. To achieve this an abandoned warehouse was taken down except for its foundations which gives an playful barrier between the school and the opened city block.

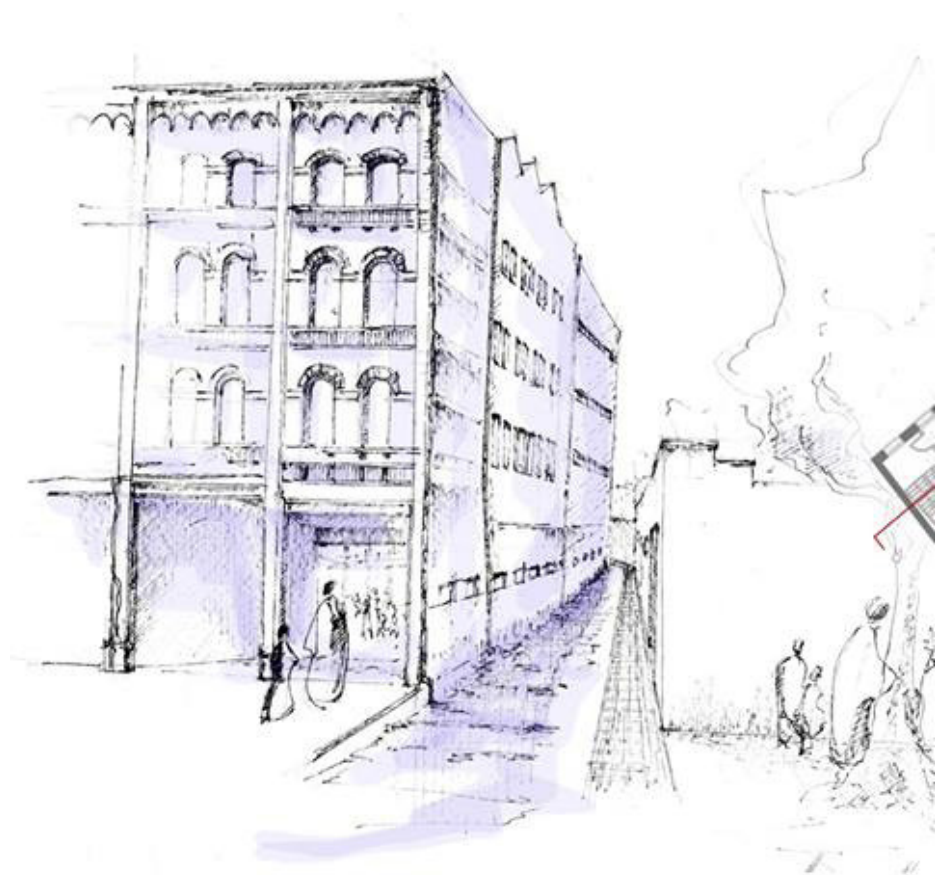
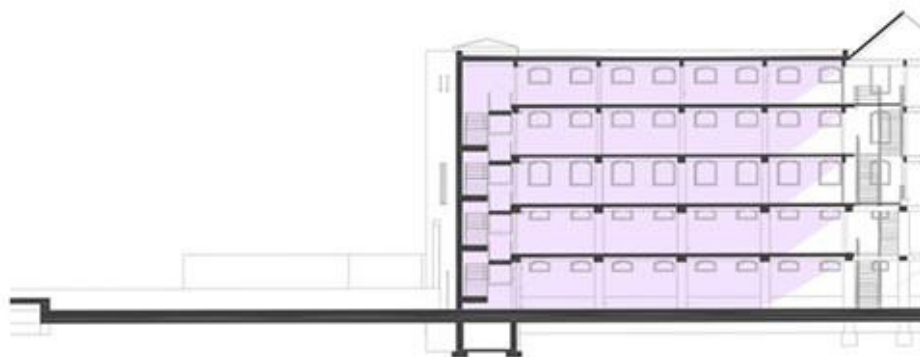
The malt house itself was approached with the same concept. Through history a lot of changes were made, this resulted into three different structures inside the building: a steel structure (at the side of the Kartuizerlaan), a concrete structure (at the side of the Sleepstraat) and a wooden structure in between. The softer wooden structure is placed in the middle of the building and therefore becomes the epicentre. We translated this into a large atrium in which we only took out the floor planks but kept the wooden columns and beams. Opening up the roof here enabled the large building to breathe and to perceive light. The steel part was transformed with little effort to be office spaces which answers the passive identity of the Kartuizerlaan. And we intended to give, just like the wooden part, the concrete part to the neighbourhood.

Meaning that we provide flexibility for the people to set up their own pop-up stores, maybe someone fixes bikes or gives knitting lessons. The former malt house becomes the centre of the neighbourhood. Through the suggested porosity the former enclosed city block becomes a breathing active city block that engages with the neighbourhood and the people.

*Right: sketches of the existing context, analysis of the area.*

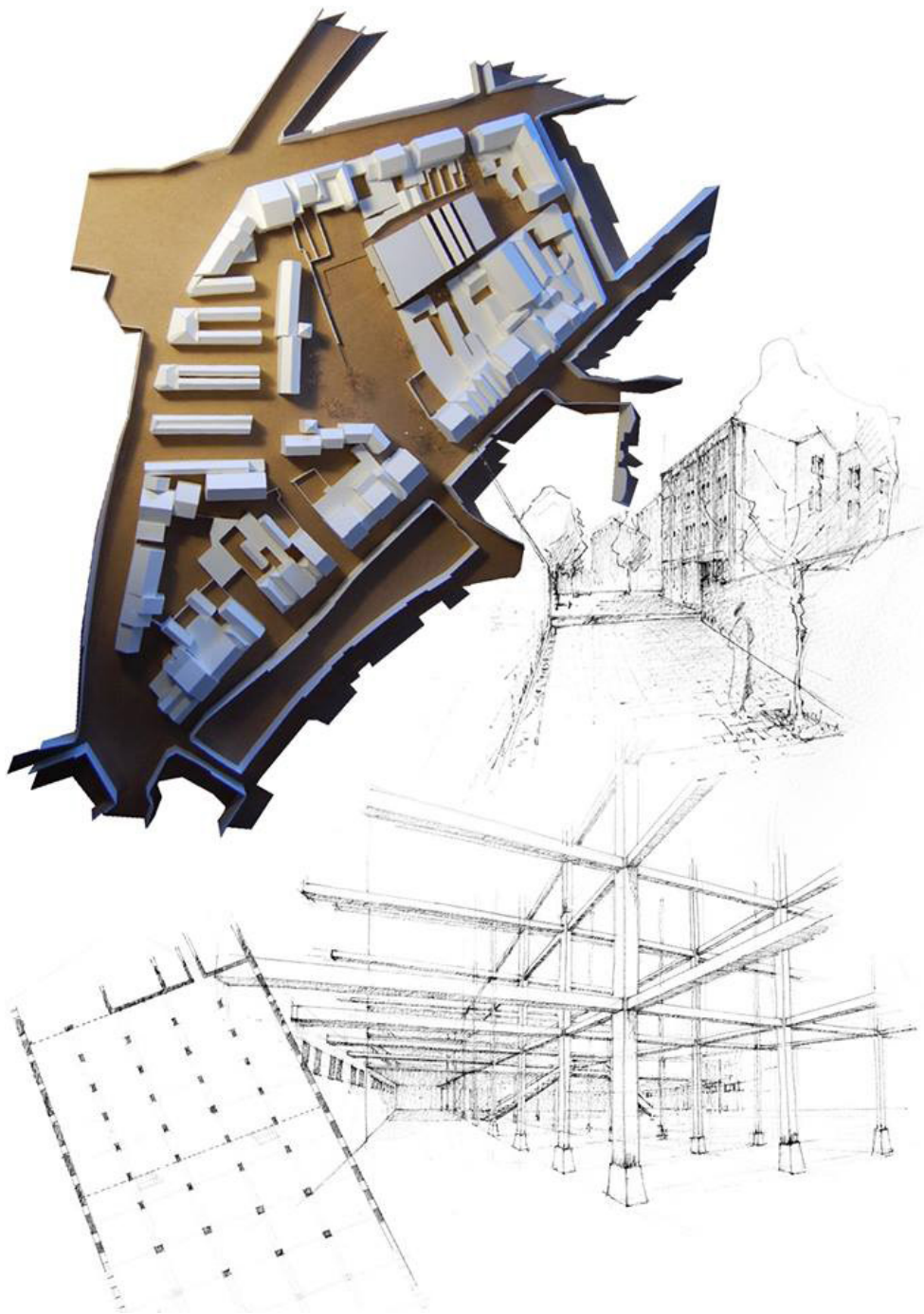




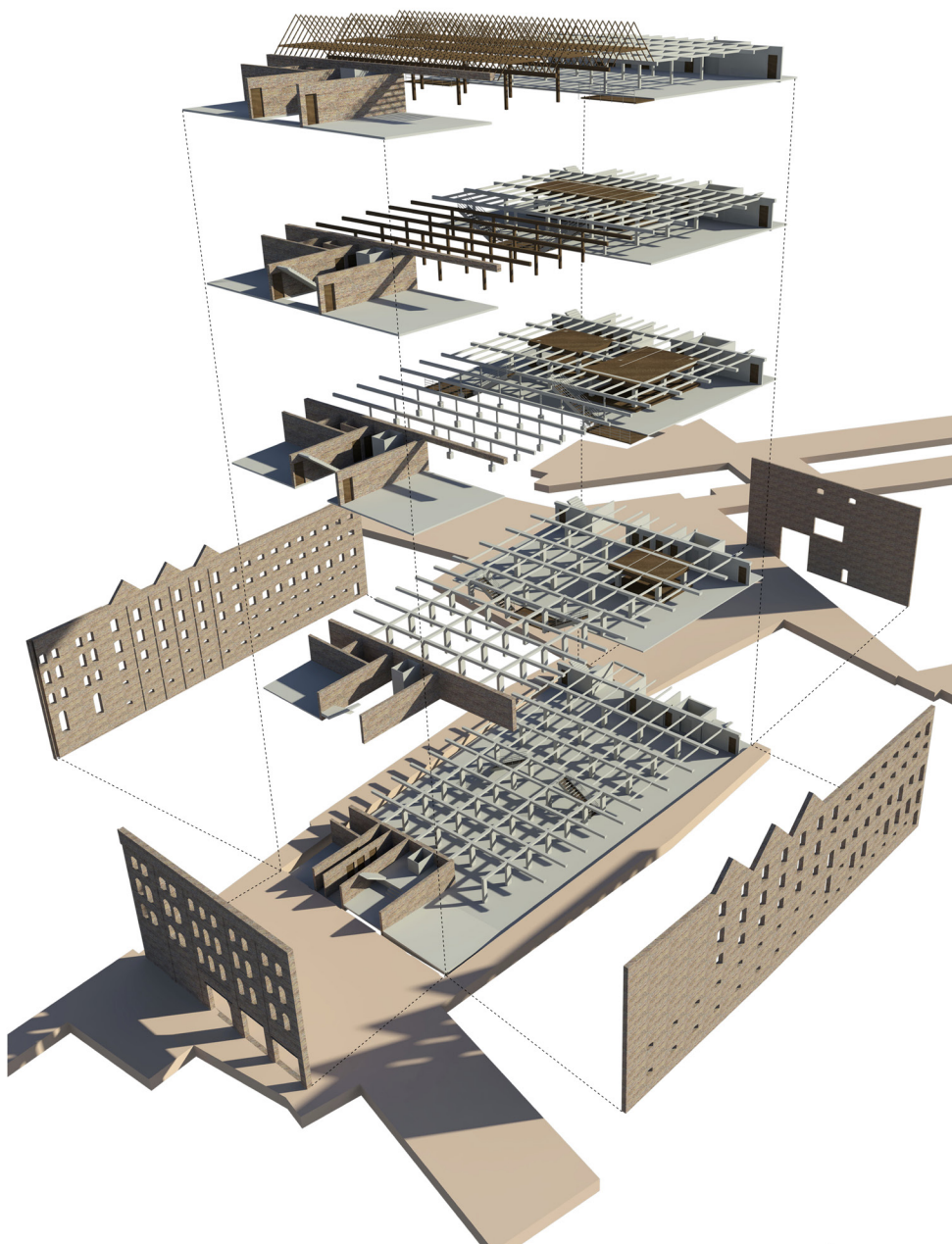


*Air and light study. Floorplan.*





*Model showing the whole area; sketches of the structure and rhythm of the interior.*



*Isometric exploded view, build-up of the project.*



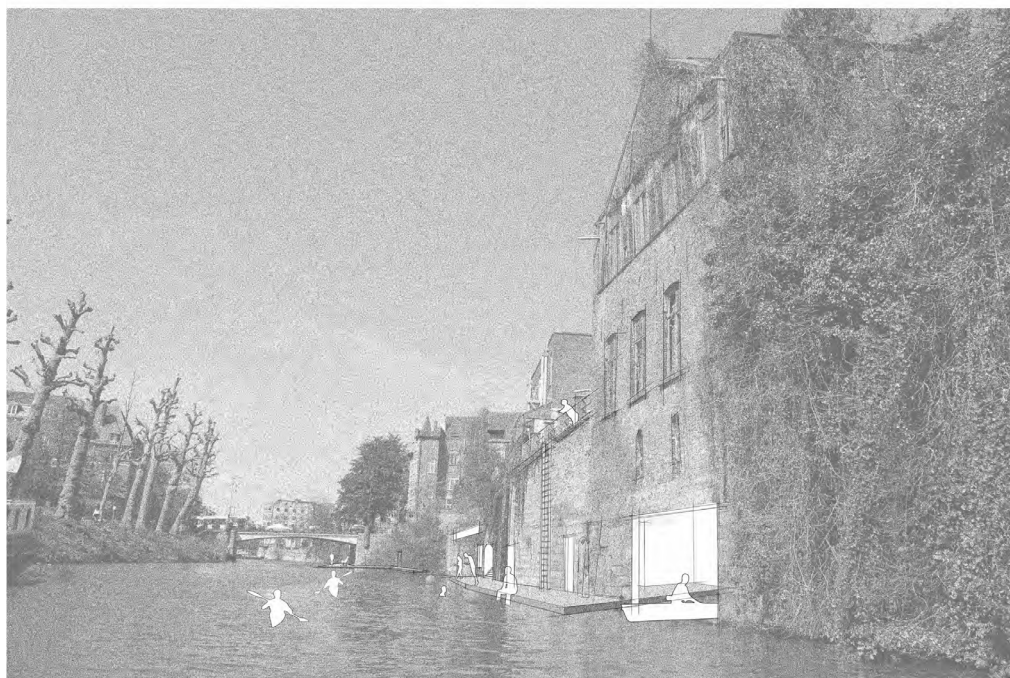
Jeremie Lichtfus  
Katazyna Anna Jegorow





Acting in Redundancy was for us a chance to ask ourselves the big question: “is it always necessary for architects to physically build something in order to enhance the environment in which you are designing?” This design studio allowed us to make an attempt of designing by analysing and proposing participation of the stakeholders living on our site. So, our site was located in the old part of the city of Ghent, precisely in a old street that was before a part of the canal call Tichelrei. First, we based our analysis upon history. From the early 20th century till the beginning of the 21st century, we realised that transportation has changed and this changed the surroundings, the typology of the street and the buildings around. Secondly, functions and facilities around this street have changed the relations “building to street” and “people to public space”. We have noticed a huge mix of functions, which conflicts with the inhabitants, as they don’t find themselves a place where they belong. Our design was based on a long-term strategy, almost like assuming a strong relationship between the clients and the architects in order to make the project evolving through years. Basically, the proposal is to improve the street by either blocking access, opening spaces to public, flatten roads or changing functions in order to give back to the street its first role: being the first public space that belongs to everyone. In reality, we attempted to reach this goal by blocking the whole street to cars and other vehicles. By moving some bushes, we managed to turn a one-way-backyard relation building into a two-ways-crossing relation building, towards the public space. Flattening the street allows people to appropriate the space, as it is the continuity of their indoor spaces. Plus, we also opened green areas to public by creating common gardens or playful areas that bring a sense of community. This little changes enhance the sense of membership and strengthen the relationship between neighbours and all involved stakeholders. To conclude, throughout this design spread out over six years, we attempted to change part of the city and way of living together (in community) by making as little changes as possible in order to reach a big change in the whole area.

Lea Mittelberger  
Hannes Monserez  
Ou Ueno  
Jasper Van der Linden



We were captured by a small place in the middle of the city - totally visible for everyone but still unknown for the most. That was what that fascinated us. Some people know about it from a distance, but it still kept its secrets and myths behind its walls.

So we started to observe; To feel; To smell; To experience; To listen.

We found more similar spaces behind the wall along the Leie.

We saw different layers. We were trying to read the history. Trying to capture the atmosphere. Always trying to listen what the place tells us.

We went there again and again; Experienced the different caves.

Observed it from different angles; Touched different materials, different atmospheres, different histories; Different layers.

With the time we were aware what the place offered and were trying to find a way to respect it. We wanted to show what is behind that wall. Make the layers visible. Accessible. Connected. The inside.

The outside. People. Atmosphere. Landscape. Respect what is there. Use what it offers.

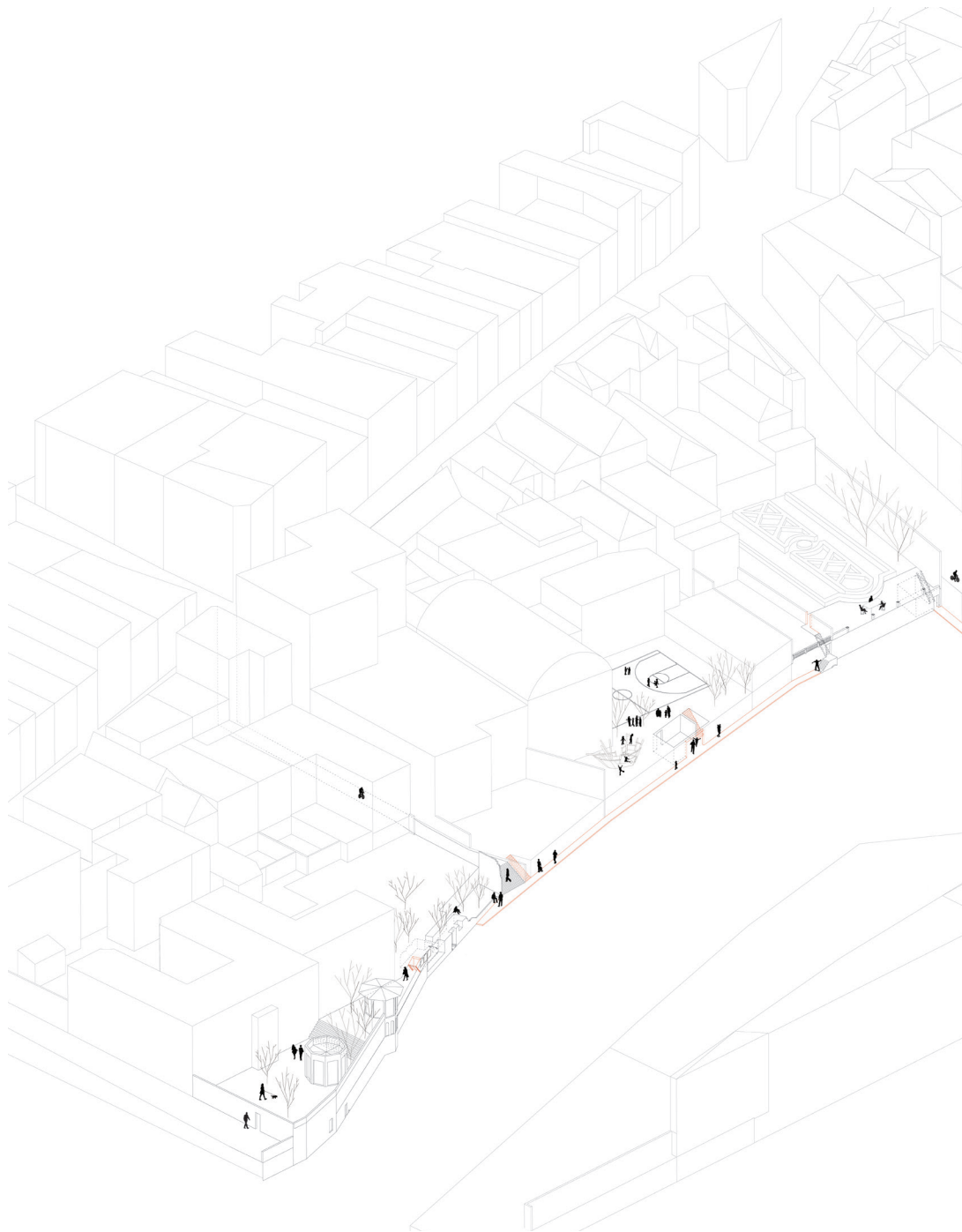
Create something for people but not for everybody. Keep the treasure. Keep it clean and simple. Keep it special.

We decided to connect the neighbours and make it theirs. Everyone gives and takes. Everyone can enjoy and explore. Everyone can be part of the whole. Physically we are adding a few stairs, a platform, some trees,... creating access, connecting spaces,...

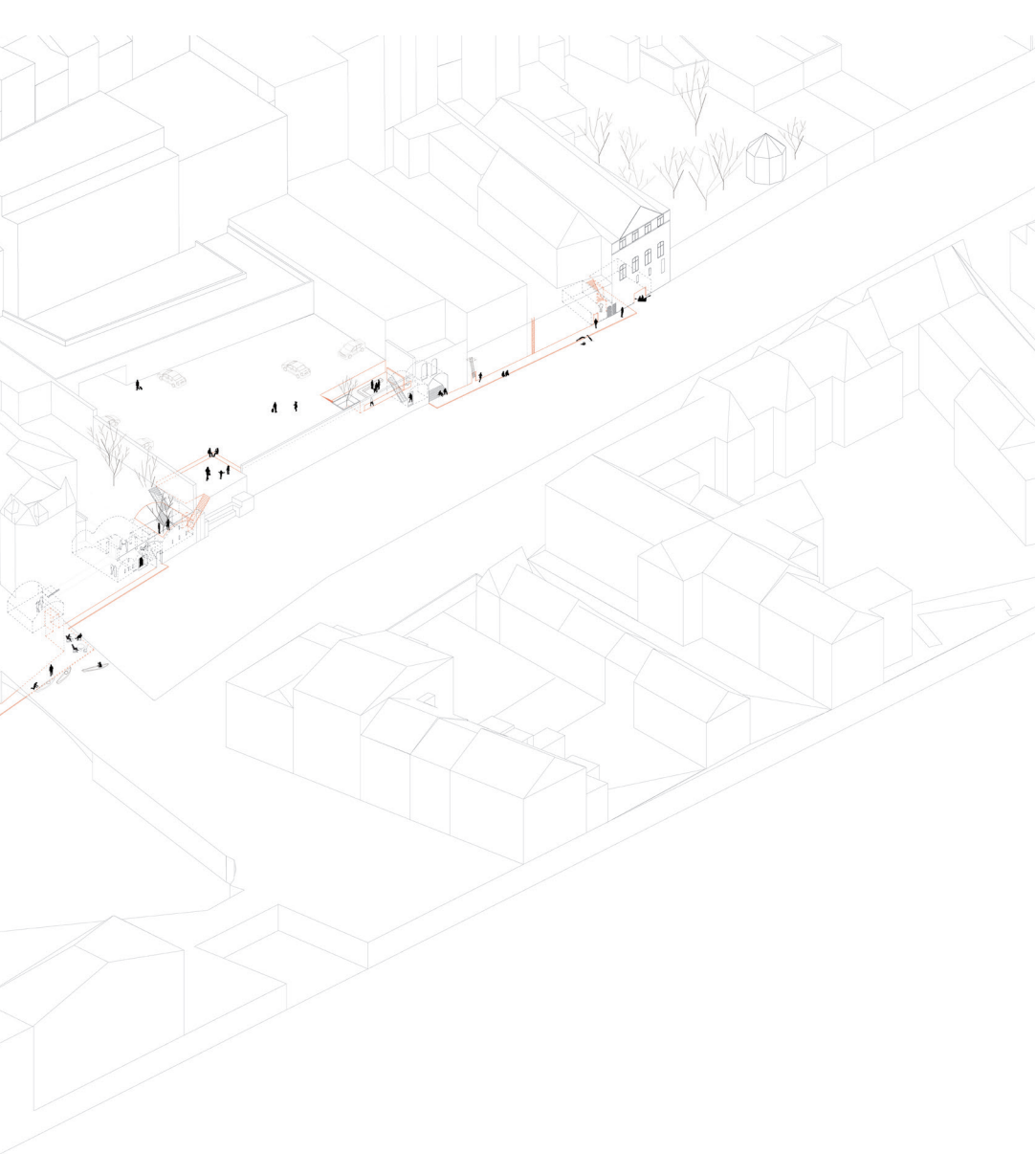
But these additions become more than just the connections between the existing, they become space.

Meeting, playing, relaxing.

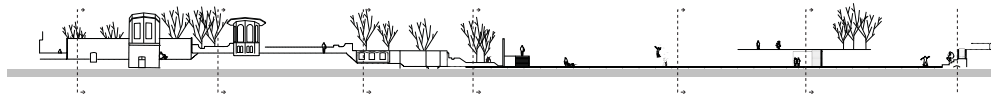
It is about adding a new layer to the history; A layer of today; With people.



*Overall view, composition of all the small interventions.*



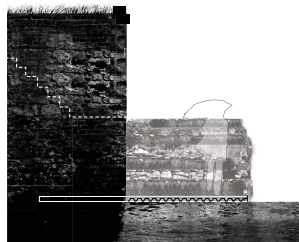
view 1:500



sections 1:200



views 1:50

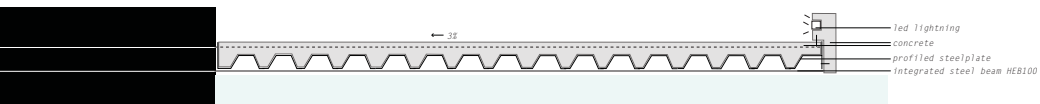
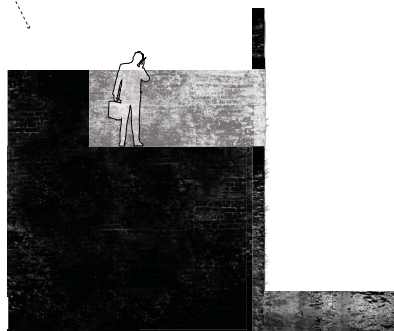
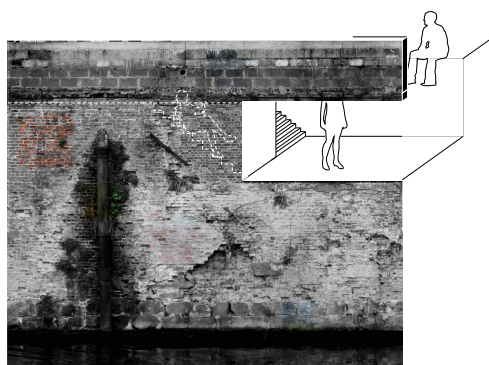
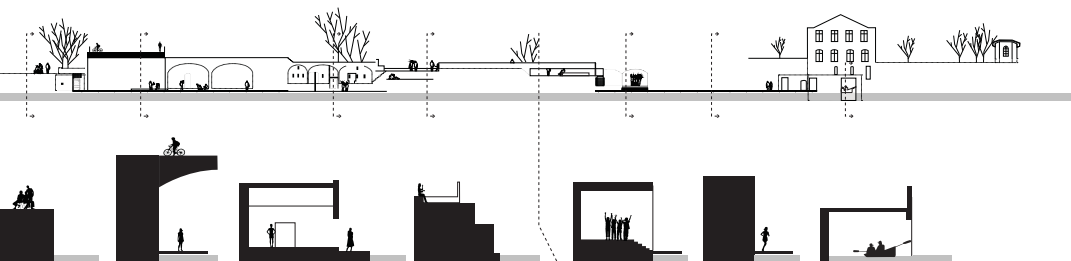


detail 1:10



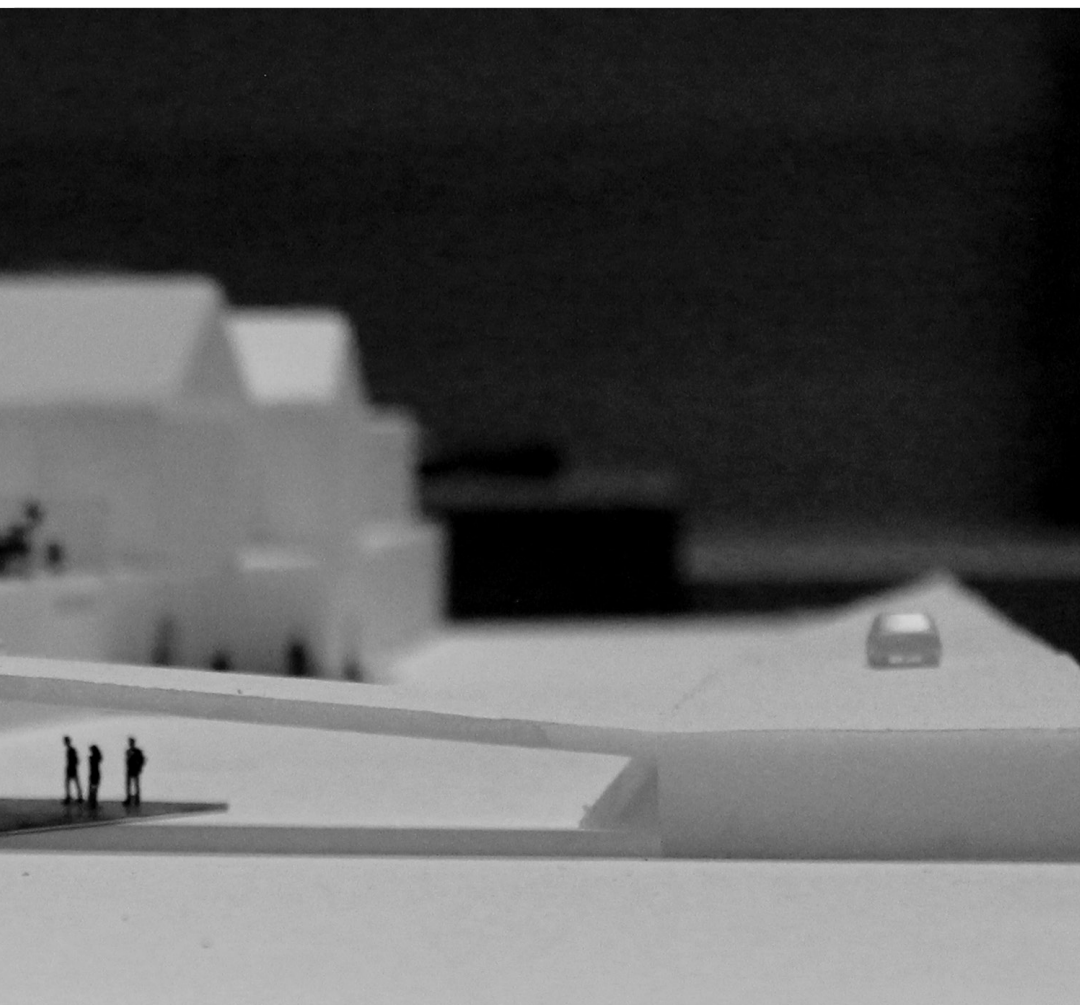
*Sections and impressions.*







*Model picture, scale impression in the existing tissue.*



Adam Lukačovič  
Katherine Seagrief  
Carlo De Caluwé  
Jolien Lossy



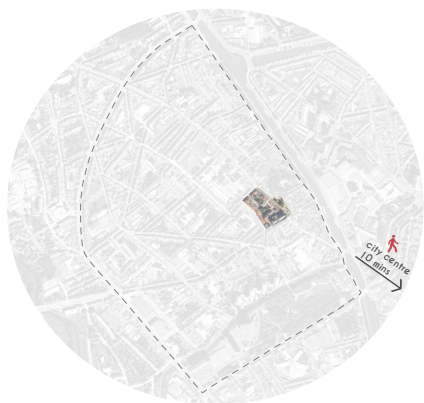
Brugse Poort is a socially diverse and animated neighbourhood. Through our investigations we discovered the very strong community engagement that exists here. It was also quickly apparent that there was an important public building lying redundant in the heart of the neighbourhood, almost an intact ruin, the Sint Jan Baptist Church building. Here was an opportunity to create a fragile intervention in order to return this building to the community as was the original intention of the church. On the larger scale this lead us to consider the place of the church in society. Declining populations of church-goers means there are a huge number of these building lying empty. With this in mind we tried to approach our project as a case study of how a redundant building can be reactivated in a sensitive and beneficial way for the community. Doing something for the people rather, than the city, avoiding gentrification of the area. Community engagement was a fundamental part of our research: we carried out research and interviews, attended local events and actions to really get to know the community and the people who live there. This lead us to re-think the public space around the site; linking the building with the public realm and considering the block as a whole, creating new links through un-used public space and an urban continuity for the local residents.

**HORIZONTAL INTERVENTION:** the pavement is the most direct link between the outside and inside, the new pavement runs smoothly throughout the public space, taking into account the differences in floor level of the existing structures and unifying the public space.

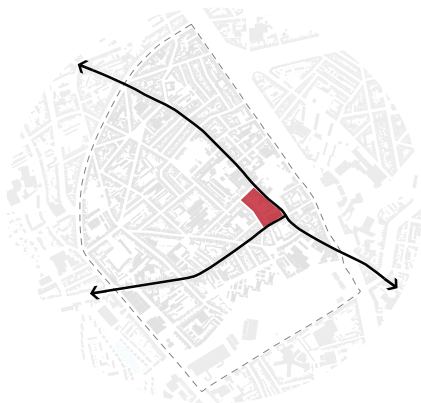
**VERTICAL INTERVENTION:** complementing the new pavement vertical openings are created in the building. Working with the gothic structure of the old building, keeping in mind the acting in redundancy theory, meaning to use what's there and only taking away what's unnecessary, thereby removing the borders between the community and their public space.

Infinite flexibility is an impossible ideal so we considered several local events that could be enhanced by a larger more accessible public space. Within the new floor will be integrated services, providing the opportunity for these events, while having enough flexibility for all of them to be possible.

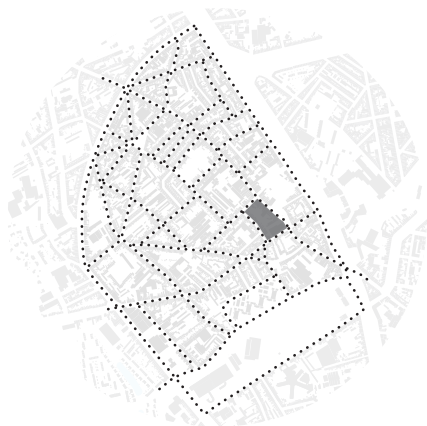




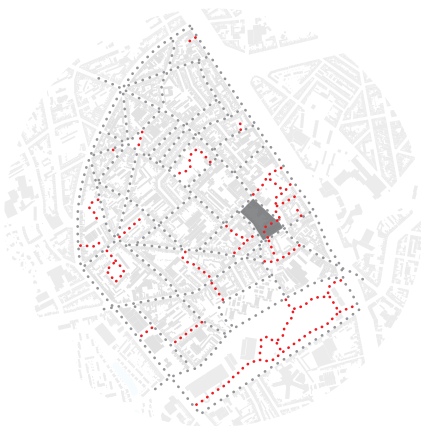
**BRUGSE POORT SITE**  
*defined neighbourhood on the  
 periphery of the city centre*



**MAIN AXES**  
*the site lies in the epicentre  
 of the neighbourhood*

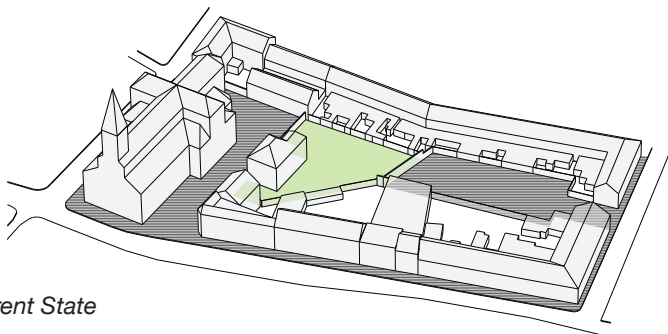


**CONNECTIONS**  
*obvious connections throughout  
 the neighbourhood*

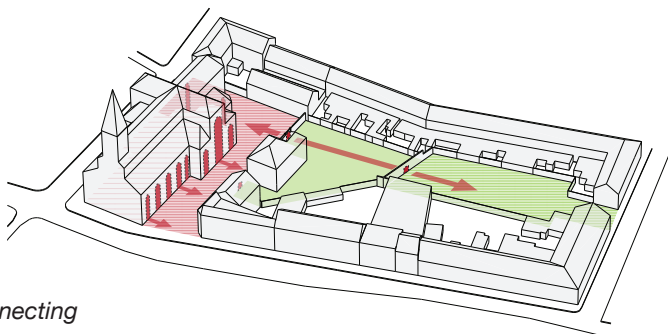


**HIDDEN CONNECTIONS**  
*pedestrian links only to  
 local residents*

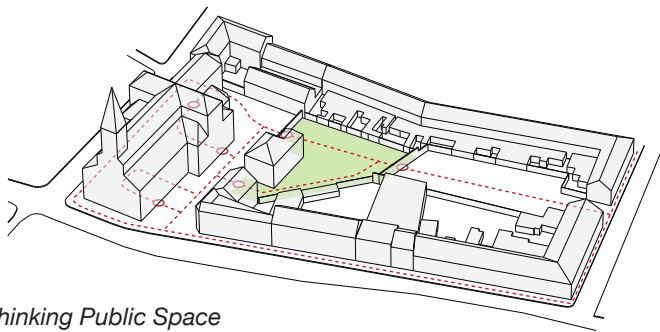




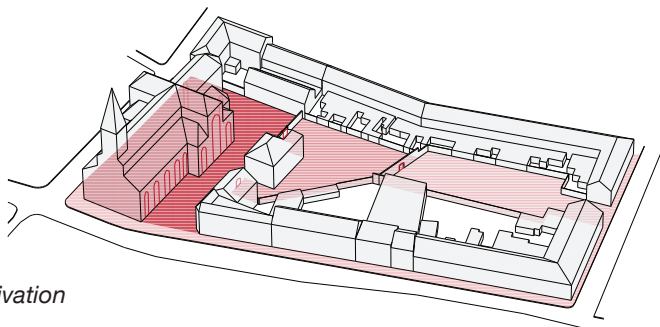
*Current State*



*Connecting*



*Rethinking Public Space*



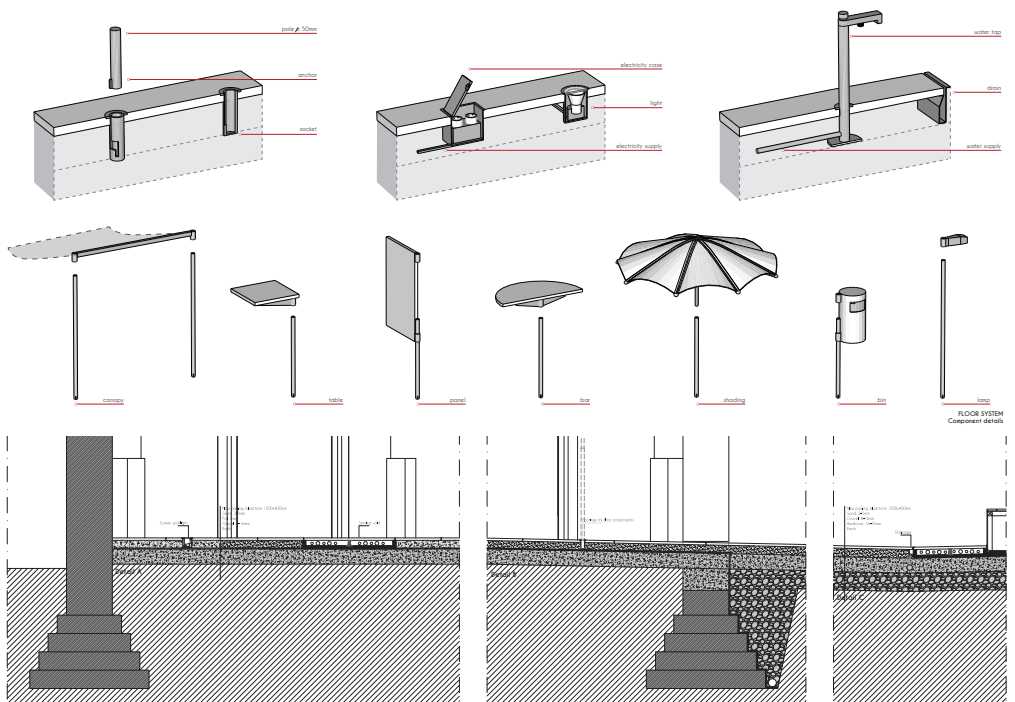
*Activation*



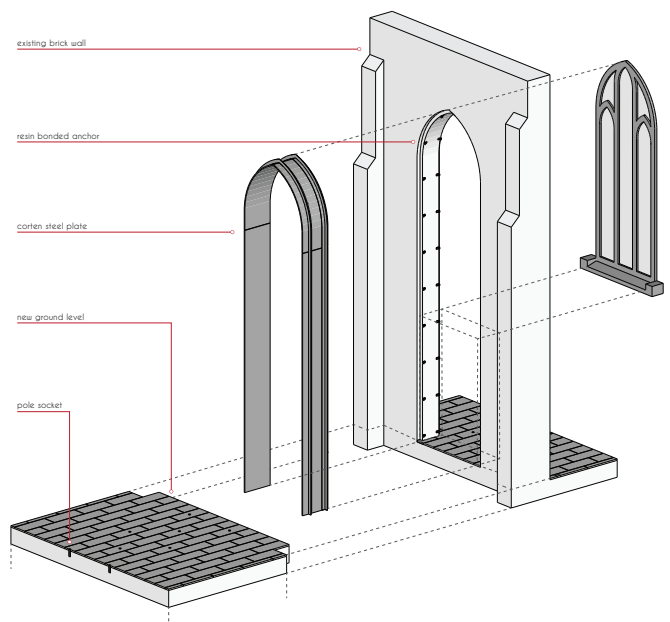
*Longitudinal section*



*Transversal section*



*Floor system*



*Exploded view of architectonic principle*



Afendi (53)

"It would be great to share my skills with the local people. Cooking is also something that we can learn from different cultures."



Femma Ladies

"We've been living here for a long time. There used to be a market and we wish there was a place for one again. It's fun to have breakfast here at the weekend."



Bernadette

"Growing flowers is my passion and I love to share this with other people at the local flower market."







Aaron (25)

"I'm an artist working in Brugse poort and I would really like more space to display my work. People can really appreciate graffiti art if they see it displayed in the right way."



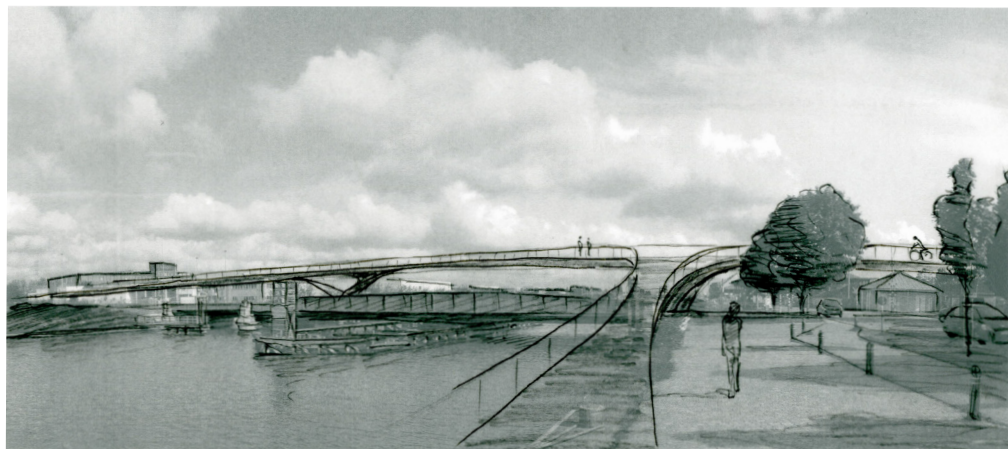
Damian (33)

"I play guitar in a band, there's a lot of music going on in Brugse Poort and we need a bigger venue to play in. My mum thinks we will make it big one day!"



*Social input: interviews with residents and locals.*

Thomas Heyndrickx  
Zuzana Kneznikova  
Martijn Verfaillie  
Alejandra Vázquez Luna





*Site Meude – Meulestede* is an island in the docks of Ghent. The Canal surrounding the area connects the city with Terneuzen, and hence allows direct access to the sea. The island is divided into three areas: post-industrial, residential and active industry. The function of Voorhaven, the canal bordering the west bank and connecting site with Oude Dokken, is leaving its industrial past and becomes an attractive place for living. Old storage buildings are transferred into luxury accommodation. Industrial ships are adapted for living.

*Problems.* The island is spatially limited and large proportion of the area occupies active industry. Industry introduced workers' community to the site that was part of medieval Ghent. Interviews with local people revealed several missing functions: market/supermarket, pubs/café (providing basic social interaction), day-care centre/nursery, playgrounds, and bicycle rental. But the most striking problem seems to be disconnection. The whole island depends on three connection points and one merely for railway.

This causes every-day traffic problems.

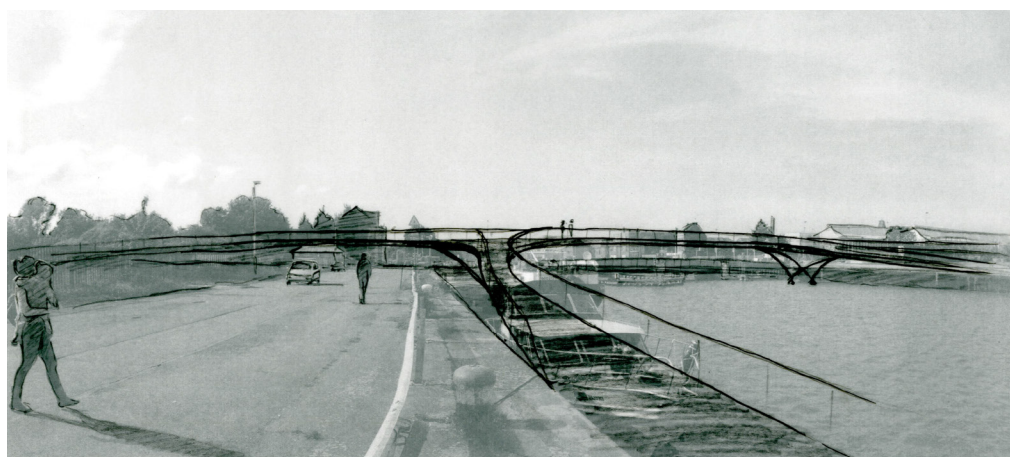
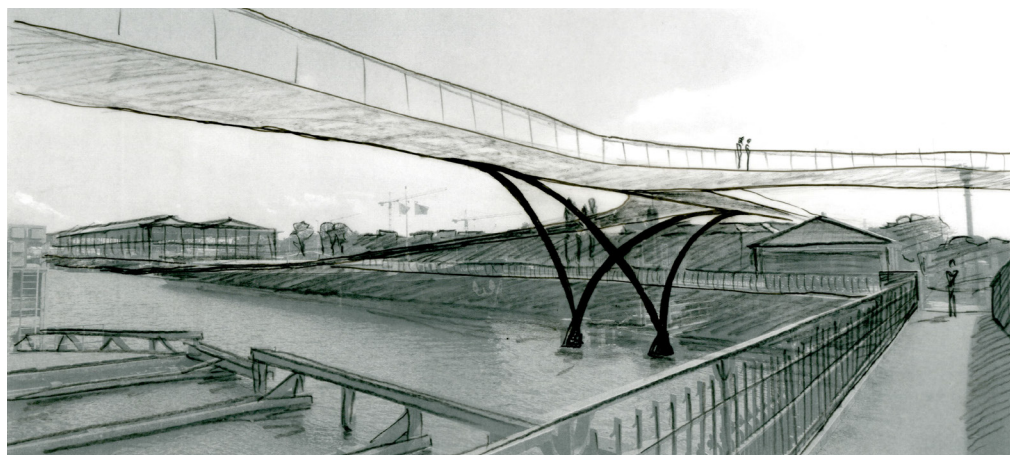
*Proposal.* By fulfilling the basic needs, we can allow thing to happen. By providing infrastructure, we can connect island not only spatially, but socially, as well. Our proposal is to give importance to more sustainable ways of transport – bicycles and public transport – which are the most neglected areas of transportation on the island.

We propose a missing link on one of the main bicycle routes in Ghent and we intend to raise it above all traffic, which lack a sense of human scale and even disables people from crossing / passing.

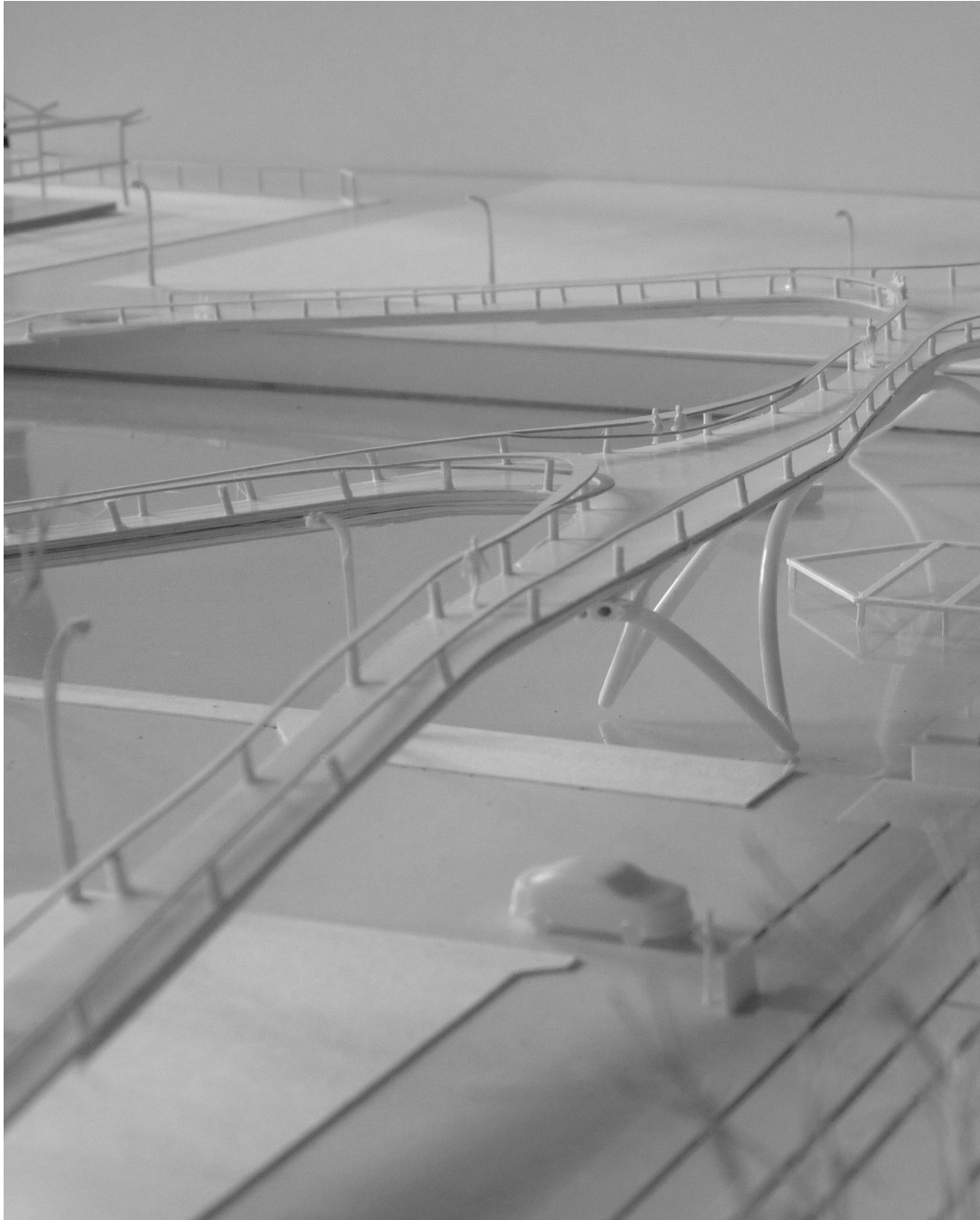
We also propose to introduce planned water taxi joining the city of Ghent with Terneuzen. Water taxi can work on two different scales – city and intercity scale – and the switch between them is very well suitable for the site on the island before the railway bridge, which is opening only few times a day.

Therefore we apply one object, which combines not only five different important directions, but also three different levels – water, street and bicycle/pedestrian bridge.

*Design.* By translation of the movement, we design a fluent object with five arms gently touching the ground and continually merging with the path. One of the arms is prolonged and touches the water surface, where it widens to provide a space for water taxi stop, and then comes up again and lands on the ground. The bridge moves beyond a mere infrastructure and becomes a public space, where social interaction is allowed to happen. Connections of arms are widened and object itself transforms into resting place for contemplation above water by the means of widened railing lowering down to act as a bench. Designed steel structure refers to the materiality of the site. But the use of materials develops throughout the time and our design aims to reflect on it with more contemporary use of steel. Whole structure is supported at two points by pairs of curved inverted V-shaped supports. Structure of the deck is covered by stressed skin – white metal sheet – which acts also as a structural component. For the deck finishing we use white asphalt that supports the idea of fluency.

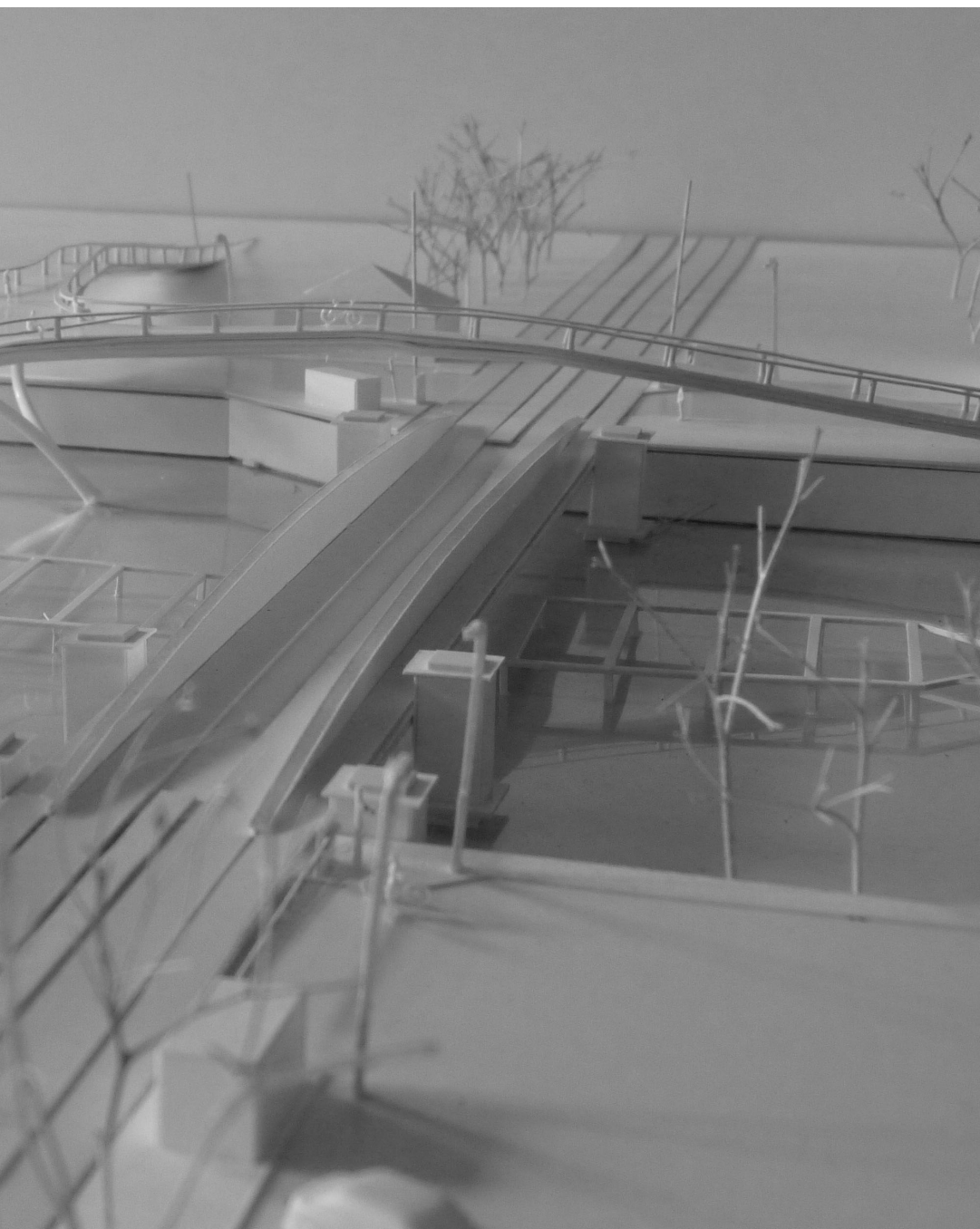


*Impressions of the bridge, implantation in the existing landscape.*



*Model picture, the whole site.*





# CONTRIBUTORS

## ***Coordinator design studio***

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*Architect and urbanist*

## ***Teachers design studio***

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Petra Pferdmenges

*Architect and researcher*

Laurens Bekemans

*Architect*

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Sandy de Bruyker

*Architect*

Dieter De Vos

*Civil engineer – Architect*

Johan Nielsen

*Architect and researcher*

## ***Students***

Mentioned alongside their projects.



## REFERENCES

### *Images*

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# NOTES



# Acting in Redundancy



